

# The History of Public Address as an Academic Study

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*[I]f modern methods of study are to be applied to the art, the science, or the philosophy of public address, something like a connected narrative of its beginning and growth, its decadences and revivals is necessary.*

Lorenzo Sears, *The History of Oratory* (1895)

The history of public address is a complex subject. As traditionally used within the Communication discipline, public address can refer to a practice (the giving of speeches), the product of that practice (speech texts), or the analysis of both the practice and its product (speech criticism). Implicit is an interest in speakers, speeches, and audiences. While the term public address has expanded since the 1960s to include media other than public speeches, it is important to keep in mind that the origins of the field lay in the studies which, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, usually went by the moniker Rhetoric and Oratory. We cannot understand how we got to where we are today without first understanding from whence we came.

## The Nineteenth-Century Seedbed of Public Address

Perhaps no single event was more consequential for the development of public address studies than the publication of Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* in 1783. Blair's book was the catalyst that began the movement away from Rhetoric and Oratory in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In 1800, Rhetoric and Oratory still dominated American education, which, it must be remembered, was education for the elite. Courses in Rhetoric and Oratory emphasized declamations, disputations, commonplace speeches, the reading of dramatic dialogues, the translation of Greek and Roman orations, and public speaking. The new belles lettres tradition subordinated all of that to written rhetoric, placing a heavy emphasis on style, composition, criticism, taste, grace, charm, wit, and various forms

of literary rhetoric. Although other rhetorics were available – John Holmes’s *The Art of Rhetoric* (1755), John Ward’s *A System of Oratory* (1759), George Campbell’s *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776), John Witherspoon’s *Lectures on Moral Philosophy and Eloquence* (1800–1801), John Quincy Adams’s *Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory* (1810), and Richard Whately’s *Elements of Rhetoric* (1828) – Blair’s ideas quickly came to dominate the American academy and held the preeminent place in higher education for more than half a century. One result of this domination was a rising interest in literary forms of rhetoric – essays, poems, letters, and dialogues – and a concomitant decrease of academic interest in oral rhetoric as the centerpiece of higher education. Shortly after the so-called Golden Age of American Oratory – the age of Webster, Calhoun, Clay, and Lincoln – the teaching of oratorical forms of rhetoric slowly began to give way to the teaching of written rhetoric.<sup>1</sup>

As mainstream rhetorical education moved away from the oratorical ideal, another stream of thought with European origins – the elocution movement – began to fill the vacuum. Elocution traced its origins to the Europe of 1762 and the teachings of Thomas Sheridan. But by the second quarter of the nineteenth century it had firmly established roots in America with the publication of James Rush’s *The Philosophy of the Human Voice* (1827). Elocutionists emphasized voice and delivery, to the exclusion of any serious thought about invention or arrangement. Style was important only as adornment – a way to make an impression on an audience. Memory was practiced but not theorized. Delivery was everything. With the English translation of François Delsarte’s *The Art of Oratory, System of Delsarte* (1882), elocution became the predominant way to teach oral delivery, whether of a speech, poem, play, or interpretive reading. For students interested in oratory, the elocution movement was about as close to systematic education as one could find in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Some of that education was given in colleges and universities, some provided by private schools of elocution, some by independent teachers, and some by churches, schools, and civic organizations. Herman Cohen captured the ubiquity of elocution when he noted:

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Elocution books were in abundance and almost every middle class home contained at least one such volume. The books were often adapted to very specific audiences; some contained material included for children who had just begun to read; others were designed to be read by young people and adults. The selections in the books included many of the “classics” of literature; many of them contained “morally uplifting” selections advocating chastity, temperance and religion. Most of the books also contained physical and breathing exercises, as well as vocal exercises.<sup>2</sup>

There was even a sort of natural symbiosis between the belles lettres tradition, with its emphasis on writing and literature, and the elocution movement, with its emphasis on speaking for an audience. Both used literary works to achieve performative ends.

By the last third of the nineteenth century, the belles lettres tradition was being challenged by the rise of the German research university, with its emphasis on

research, specialization, and language studies. Beginning in the 1860s, many American scholars traveled to Germany to obtain the PhD degree, something not yet offered in most American universities.<sup>3</sup> The emphasis in the German universities was on language, logic, and philology. Soon academic departments in America, which had displayed a wide variety of titles throughout most of the nineteenth century, came to be called departments of English Language and Literature, eventually shortened to simply English. The title was meant to signify that the departments were research oriented and devoted to the “scientific” study of language and literature. It was also a way of distinguishing themselves from the earlier educational traditions of Rhetoric and Oratory on the one hand, and Rhetoric and Belles Lettres on the other, both of which were primarily interested in pedagogy, not research.

Just as this German ideal of a research university was emerging in Europe, another branch of scholarship started to appear in America. This was the movement toward Composition and Rhetoric. Represented by works such as Alexander Bain’s *English Composition and Rhetoric* (1866), Adams Sherman Hill’s *Principles of Rhetoric* (1878), John Franklin Genung’s *Practical Elements of Rhetoric* (1886), and Barrett Wendell’s *English Composition* (1891), this branch of scholarship grew out of those parts of the Rhetoric and Oratory as well as the Rhetoric and Belles Lettres traditions concerned with the principles of composition. Orators had been concerned with the composition of speeches. Scholars in the belles lettres tradition had been concerned with the composition of poems and letters and essays. But both of these traditions were now being challenged – and in many places would soon be supplanted – by the philological emphasis spawned by the German research university.

By 1890, these three distinct branches of human learning were discernible in American universities. In a way, these branches represented the reinvention of the ancient trivium of rhetoric, grammar, and dialectic. The old Rhetoric and Oratory branch, which never disappeared entirely but which, by the 1890s, existed primarily in its bastardized form of Elocution, represented ancient rhetoric. That part of the belles lettres tradition that emphasized written composition and criticism had been incorporated into the Composition and Rhetoric branch, and bore some similarities to medieval grammar. And the new emphasis on philology, logic, and language structures bore a resemblance to some branches of ancient dialectic. The analogy is not perfect, but it underscores the fact that each of these branches represented the basic ways of striving for knowledge that had represented humanistic inquiry since the time of Cicero. By the end of the nineteenth century, all three of these branches were growing – uncomfortably – in the academic soil of the English department.

## The Emergence of Public Speaking

The act of speaking in public had, of course, continued unabated throughout the nineteenth century. But the theory of speaking in public to influence an audience – what the ancients called rhetoric – was no longer taught on a systematic basis in

most institutions of American higher education by the end of the nineteenth century. Indeed, there had been little systematic instruction in the whole art of rhetoric since the middle 1820s. Rhetorical instruction had been broken up into parts and taught by people who were primarily interested in something else – literature, language, philology, grammar, composition, criticism, drama – almost anything but rhetoric proper. To the extent that training in oral rhetoric existed at all, it did so primarily in the schools of elocution, the student-sponsored literary society, or the extracurricular debate club. Space does not allow a complete explanation of each of these sources, but two events of the 1890s seem to warrant comment: the founding in 1892 of the National Association of Elocutionists, and the publication in 1895 of George Pierce Baker's *The Principles of Argumentation*.

The National Association of Elocutionists was a trade organization that counted private teachers, professional speakers and actors, seekers of self-help and personal improvement, and academic educators as members. It is important to our history because (1) several of the early members of what will become the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking – Thomas C. Trueblood, Robert I. Fulton, S. S. Hamill, and others – were trained as elocutionists and studied under some of the famous elocutionary teachers of the late nineteenth century,<sup>4</sup> and (2) the National Association of Elocutionists would morph into the National Speech Arts Association in 1906. This association would number among its members such figures as James A. Winans, Charles H. Woolbert, Joseph Searle Gaylord, Binney Gunnison, and Haldor Gislason – all founding members of the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking, the organization now called the National Communication Association.<sup>5</sup>

The publication of Baker's book in 1895 is also important for two reasons: (1) it was the first textbook to articulate the rhetorical principles of argumentation, and (2) it gave a theoretical basis for a practice that had been going on at the literary society and club level for decades and that would shortly become a staple of the university curriculum – competitive debating. In short, Baker's work helped to make debating an acceptable part of the university curriculum by giving the practice a theoretical rationale. Intercollegiate debating had been going on for more than a decade, but the 1892 debate between Harvard and Yale drew widespread attention to the activity. Debating in the 1890s was purely a club sport, not a part of the university curriculum. Baker's book helped to move debate into the curriculum. With the growth of debate as an "official" university activity, the demand for qualified faculty to direct the activity grew. But with rare exceptions, there were few qualified faculty.

By the middle 1890s, there were fewer than 60 colleges and universities across the nation with a department that focused on oral rhetoric, and those that did exist were mostly in the Midwest, with DePauw (1884), Earlham (1887), Michigan (1892), Chicago (1892), and Ohio Wesleyan (1894) leading the way. The main exceptions to this geographical density were Cornell (1889) in the East and Southern California (1895) in the West. When James A. Winans arrived at Cornell in the fall of 1899, he joined a department of English that had three internal divi-

sions: English literature, rhetoric and English philology, and elocution and oratory. Winans's initial job was to teach declamation – the oral presentation of selected pieces of literature and oratory, usually from memory.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the last third of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, declamation was the chief way of teaching oral rhetoric.

But starting around 1900, Winans sought and received permission to begin teaching students how to conceive and deliver original speeches. Today, we usually call such courses public speaking, but that was a locution that had only recently come into use – and not widespread use at that. Indeed, the first textbooks to use the words “public speaking” in their titles did not appear until the mid-to-late 1890s.<sup>7</sup> Even if such courses or books had existed, they would not have connoted to most academics the kind of course that we call “public speaking” today. In 1900, “public” meant a work intended to be performed, usually at a public recital or an elocutionary display. It was more akin to our contemporary notion of public entertainment. And the “speaking” part did not necessarily mean – indeed, it usually did not mean – a public speech. It typically meant a reading, a declamation, a dramatic dialogue, or a poem, often rendered from memory and given as a performance. The first “public address” book of the twentieth century – George Pierce Baker's *The Forms of Public Address* (1904) – was a collection of written (letters and editorials) and spoken (speeches) rhetoric, intended to be read aloud by the students, who could memorize selections as needed. Correspondingly, the first page following the copyright is labeled “Choice Readings.”<sup>8</sup>

Public speeches were, of course, still being given, but they were primarily the domain of public leaders – legislators, politicians, judges, ministers, and lawyers. Since the publication in Philadelphia of James Burgh's *The Art of Speaking* (1775) and of Caleb Bingham's *The American Preceptor* (1794), Americans from various walks of life had busied themselves with publishing speech compilations, extracts, abridgments, readers, and anthologies. Early works included *The Columbian Orator* (1797), *The Pulpit Orator* (1804), *The Forum Orator, or, The American Public Speaker* (1804), *The American Orator* (1807), *The Virginia Orator* (1808), *The British Cicero* (1810), *The American Orator* (1817), and *The American Orator* (1819). This early body of work culminated with the publication in 1827 of the five-volume work, *Eloquence of the United States*, compiled by Ebenezer Bancroft Williston. Ironically, Williston's collection of American speeches appeared the same year as Rush's *The Philosophy of the Human Voice*, the first American elocution text. The titles of books thereafter began to reflect the growing influence of elocution: *The New American Speaker: Comprising Elegant Selections in Eloquence and Poetry, Intended for Exercises in Declamation and Elocution* (1835), *The Little Orator for Boys and Girls: In Progressive Lessons: Part I: Founded on Nature as Investigated by Dr. Rush* (1837), and *Russell's American Elocutionist* (1851).

Elocution was not, of course, the only tradition represented. The older Rhetoric and Oratory tradition was seen in such titles as *Specimens of American Eloquence* (1837), *The American Orator's Own Book* (1840), *Library of Oratory: Embracing Selected Speeches of Celebrated Orators of America, Ireland, and England* (1845),

*The Eloquence of the Colonial and Revolutionary Times* (1847), *Living Orators in America* (1849), and *The Book of Oratory* (1851). Even during their lifetimes, orators such as Webster, Everett, Clay, Calhoun, Benton, and Corwin were celebrated and anthologized. Many of their individual speeches were reproduced in pamphlet form and widely distributed. The one work of the mid-nineteenth century that would have a profound influence on the subsequent development of the public address tradition was Chauncey Allen Goodrich's *Select British Eloquence* (1852). Goodrich, Professor of Rhetoric at Yale, brought an Aristotelian mindset to bear on his critical analysis of the speaking of such figures as Pitt, Fox, Chatham, and Burke. And it was to that analysis that one of the founders of the modern public address tradition, Herbert A. Wichelns, would turn in 1925. But that event was still far in the future.

The immediate situation for orators and oratory as an academic subject in post-Civil War America was none too bright. As written forms of rhetoric came to supplant oral discourse in college classrooms, and as elocutionary theory challenged both the oratorical and belles lettres traditions for dominance, the older tradition of Rhetoric and Oratory was divided both theoretically and practically. Theories of rhetoric were taught by professors of Composition and Rhetoric who focused mostly on invention, arrangement, and style, with style understood primarily as correctness and clarity. There was no need for the classical canons of memory and delivery if the basic rhetorical form was an essay or letter. At the same time, the elocutionary movement, with its emphasis on voice and gesture, seemed to supply what the teachers of Composition and Rhetoric were lacking. But most elocutionists were not interested in the one thing that had distinguished the early teachers and practitioners of the oratorical tradition – political oratory. To the contrary, by the latter third of the nineteenth century the elocutionists' primary field of activity had become popular oratory, understood as public readings and recitations, the oral rendering of poetry and verse, declamation of short speech extracts from famous orators, and the performance of dramatic dialogues. Their primary venues were not politics and statesmanship, but rather public performances at churches, schools, the Lyceum and Chautauqua lecture circuits, and at private schools of elocution established to promulgate particular theories and techniques of oral performance.<sup>9</sup> The titles told the tale: *The Exhibition Speaker Containing Farce Dialogue and Tableaux with Exercises for Declamation in Prose and Verse* (1856), *The Perfect Gentleman, or, Etiquette and Eloquence: A Book of Information and Instruction ... Containing Model Speeches for All Occasions* (1860), *The American Union Speaker: Containing Standard and Recent Selections in Prose and Poetry, for Recitation and Declamation, in Schools, Academies, and Colleges: With Introductory Remarks on Elocution, and Explanatory Notes* (1865), *One Hundred Choice Selections; A Rare Collection of Oratory, Sentiment, Eloquence and Humor* (1875). In short, elocutionists were interested in oral discourse for the sake of a performance, and the end of speaking in public was the entertainment of an audience.

The serious study of political oratory was thus left without an advocate in the halls of academia. It was not that political oratory suddenly disappeared or vanished

from public sight – quite to the contrary. In the years 1884–1910, numerous editors produced multi-volume sets of oratory, almost all of it political in nature. More sets were produced during these years than in any other era in American history. But the sponsors of these volumes were not usually academicians, but rather the keepers of the civic culture – statesmen, politicians, newspaper editors, and lawyers. Between the Williston volumes of 1827 and the publication in 1884 of Alexander Johnston's *Representative American Orations to Illustrate American Political History*, there had been only three multi-volume sets published – the *Library of Oratory* (1845), Frank Moore's two-volume *American Eloquence* (1857), and the six-volume (and nonpolitical) *The Speaker's Garland and Literary Bouquet* (1880–1885). But all of that changed, starting in 1884. Between 1884 and 1910 there were no fewer than 13 multi-volume sets of orations published in America, virtually all of them political in nature.<sup>10</sup> Yet only two of those sets – the 1884 volumes by Johnston and the 1899–1901 volumes by Guy Carleton Lee – had an academician as the lead editor. Others were compiled by statesmen such as William Jennings Bryan, Thomas B. Reed, Chauncey M. Depew, and Henry Cabot Lodge. One was put together by a Justice of the Supreme Court, David J. Brewer. Newspaper editors such as Mayo W. Hazeltine and Alexander K. McClure produced multi-volume sets, as did librarians such as Richard Garnett. Even men of letters such as Julian Hawthorne, the son of Nathaniel Hawthorne, compiled collections of speeches. If academicians were involved in any of these productions they generally served in secondary editorial roles or as project consultants. In the scholarly world of the late 1900s, the serious study of speech texts had not yet arrived, and the fight for the right to teach public speaking as an art that involved invention, disposition, style, and memory – as well as delivery – had only just begun.

James A. Winans would be a central leader in that fight, along with James Milton O'Neill and Charles H. Woolbert. By 1904, Winans had become head of the new Department of Oratory and Debate at Cornell, following in the footsteps of Brainard Gardner Smith and Duncan Campbell Lee. He had successfully moved the department from focusing on elocution and declamation to public speaking and debate. The same movement was slowly taking place at other institutions around the country – at Michigan, under the direction of Thomas C. Trueblood; at Illinois, under the direction of Charles H. Woolbert; at Iowa, under the direction of Henry E. Gordon and Glenn N. Merry; and at Wisconsin, under the direction of James Milton O'Neill, following in the footsteps of David B. Frankenburger and Rollo L. Lyman. But at most colleges and universities around the country, public address was still being taught by professors with appointments in the English department. Indeed, even Woolbert was still in an English department at Illinois. Few had been able to make the move to separate departmental status, even though Winans, O'Neill, and others were convinced that public speaking could only flourish once the ties to English had been severed.

In 1906, the National Association of Elocutionists became the National Speech Arts Association. The name change was, in part, an effort to cleanse the organization of the opprobrium that had come to be associated with the term "elocutionist."<sup>11</sup>

It was also an effort to redirect the organization from one concerned primarily with practitioners of the elocutionary arts – performers, actors, professional readers, and the like – to one more congenial to educators. But just as the nascent speech professors felt constrained within a department of English, they also felt that they were out of place in an association started by, and existing primarily on behalf of, elocutionists. Consequently, in 1910, Paul M. Pearson, Wilbur Jones Kay, and Winans founded the Public Speaking Conference of the New England and the North Atlantic States, known colloquially as the Eastern Public Speaking Conference – what is today the Eastern Communication Association. It was the first academic association dedicated entirely to public address, understood as the theory and practice of public speaking.

The moving force behind the Eastern Public Speaking Conference was Paul M. Pearson. A professor of public speaking at Swarthmore College since 1902, Pearson had graduated from Baker University, and studied at both Harvard and Northwestern. In 1904, he produced *Pearson's Irish Reciter and Reader*. In 1905, he founded the quarterly publication *The Speaker: A Collection of the Best Orations, Poems, Stories, Debates, and One Act Plays for Public Speaking and Voice Training*. The publication ran from 1905 through 1913. In 1909, Pearson compiled *Intercollegiate Debates: Being Briefs and Reports of Many Intercollegiate Debates*. That same year he wrote *The Humorous Speaker: A Book of Humorous Selections for Reading and Speaking*. Thus, by 1910, Pearson was one of the best known – perhaps the best known – public speaking instructor in America. He was also a Chautauqua speaker. In 1912, he founded the Swarthmore Chautauqua Association. It was so successful that Pearson eventually resigned his position as professor of public speaking to spend full-time on the Chautauqua circuit, where he was already a renowned reader and reciter. In 1912, the *New York Times* reported: “Prof. Paul M. Pearson has left for his annual recital tour of the West. He is one of the most sought-after reciters on the lecture platform to-day, and has many more offers than he can spare the time for.”<sup>12</sup> Today we tend to draw a strict line between the elocutionists and the academic teachers of public speaking. But in the period from 1895–1915, those two groups were often one and the same, with many of those who would go on to become leaders in the emerging field of Speech having studied with elocutionists or having been professional readers themselves. Many of these individuals studied at the Cumnock School of Oratory at Northwestern, including Pearson.<sup>13</sup>

Having founded their own eastern regional association, it was perhaps inevitable that Pearson and his colleagues would want a broader national association. Some thought that such a broader association had come into being in December 1911, with the founding of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). Indeed, Winans himself was one of the 35 charter members of the NCTE, whose creation was inspired by a report from the National Education Association.<sup>14</sup> Most of the NCTE's early members were also affiliated with the larger Modern Language Association, which had been in existence since 1883. The new organization came as a direct result of the clash between those in English departments who taught literature and literary criticism and those who taught written and oral



composition – freshman writing and public speaking. But just as the composition teachers had found themselves treated as second-class citizens by their literary colleagues, so the speech teachers soon found themselves marginalized by teachers of composition. The NCTE was fine for those who taught written composition, but it did not meet the needs of public speaking teachers, some of whom, by 1912–1913, had decided that only a separate national organization would suffice. Their reasons for so thinking were multiple.

In a fiery resolution introduced at the March 1913 conference of the Eastern Public Speaking Conference, O'Neill noted that the teaching of public speaking around the country was unorganized and chaotic, that courses in public speaking were treated as less important than courses in English composition, that professors who taught public speaking were often overlooked at promotion time, that the principles of oral composition were different from those of written composition, that students deserved teachers who were trained in the specific subject matter, that the standards of scholarship in public speaking were simply different than those recognized by the German model of research, that public speaking classes were often assigned to the lowest-ranking instructors and to people who were unqualified to deliver the course, and that public speaking teachers were regularly treated with contempt and often abused by their English department colleagues.<sup>15</sup> He then moved that the conference support a resolution in favor of the complete separation of public speaking courses from English departments. The resolution passed.

Eight months later, at the November 1913 meeting of the NCTE, the Public Speaking Section decided to send out a nationwide questionnaire to teachers of public speaking, seeking to ascertain their preferences about departmental structure – whether public speaking should remain part of the English department or whether it should be a separate, stand-alone department. The questionnaire also asked the speech teachers whether they favored a separate national organization. The results of that survey were presented at the 1914 NCTE meeting where, after several ballots, it became clear that the group was hopelessly divided between those who wished to remain within the NCTE orbit and those who wished to form a separate organization. It was at this point that 17 of those in favor of a new organization, led by O'Neill and Winans, met separately on the second floor of the Auditorium Hotel in Chicago and proceeded to form the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking, the organization now known as the National Communication Association.<sup>16</sup>

The new association was incorporated in 1914 and published the first issue of its new journal – the *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking (QJPS)* – in April 1915. Almost immediately there arose a significant difference of opinion as to what “research” in the field of public speaking should accomplish. The influence of the German university model had made research the god-term of American higher education – what Winans characterized as “the standard way into the sheepfold.”<sup>17</sup> For Winans, such research was to be focused on the psychology of the entire public speaking situation. His 1915 public speaking textbook, based on the psychology of William James, was the model for such an approach.<sup>18</sup> For Woolbert, on the other hand, research should be devoted to discovering the facts, laws, and principles

that would set the teaching of public speaking on an equal footing with the emerging social sciences of psychology, sociology, and political science.<sup>19</sup> But for Everett Lee Hunt, a young instructor at Huron College in South Dakota, research ought to be focused on the development of character and broad, liberal learning of the sort recommended by Cicero and the ancient rhetoricians. Education in speaking should be education for life, Hunt believed, with as much focus on the content of what was said – the issues – as on the techniques used to say it or the effects of the saying on an audience.<sup>20</sup> Hunt's first book, *Persistent Questions in Public Discussion* (1924), underscored his focus on content.

The differences of opinion, as represented most dramatically in the exchanges between Woolbert and Hunt between 1915 and 1920, are of interest to the history of public address for several reasons. The Woolbert approach considered public speaking to be part of the broader science of “speech,” including speech production, speech correction, and language behavior, as well as public speaking. His 1916 *QJPS* article – “The Organization of Departments of Speech Science in Universities” – included a chart illustrating how the various aspects of “speech sciences and arts” could be conceptualized. Woolbert clearly placed the “scientific” dimensions of speech at the center of his conceptual universe. Tellingly, the “Literature of Public Address” and “Criticism” were placed *outside* of the circle of “speech sciences and arts,” and wholly within the realm of English. This was the first great challenge faced by scholars of rhetoric, oratory, and public address: Was the field of Public Speaking to be a strictly scientific enterprise or was it to include humanistic approaches to knowledge generation?<sup>21</sup>

From Woolbert's point of view, Hunt and those like him were simply stuck in a mythical past, uncomprehending of the great advances of the previous decades. With what appeared to be a bit of condescension, Woolbert wrote,

Mr. Hunt and I are of different epochs and countries. He is of a romantic golden age, I, of the common, ignoble now. He is from Greece, I am from Germany(!) – he probably by choice, I perforce. He cries out for the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome; I am surrounded by laboratories and card catalogues. Consequently when we talk about the problems of public speaking, we aren't talking about the same thing at all.<sup>22</sup>

Yet, from the outset, the teaching of public speaking had, for many members, included the teaching of public address – understood as the study of orators and oratory. In the very first volume of the *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking*, the organization's research committee listed among the needed research:

An interpretive study in the light of modern methods of great orators and orations of the past. . . .  
A first-hand study of the methods and technique of living orators. . . .  
A study of the history of public speaking and of methods of teaching it.<sup>23</sup>

In outlining his vision for a college-level curriculum in public speaking, Trueblood suggested an entire course on “great orators,” writing:

In this course a few representative ancient orators and a few modern orators of Continental Europe should be studied, but chiefly English-speaking orators – ten or twelve English and about as many American orators. Lectures should be given on the qualifications and sources of power of the orator, the construction and style of the speech, the kinds of oratory, etc.<sup>24</sup>

There was more than a little irony in the fact that the proposal to study “great orators” came from Trueblood. With his partner, Robert Fulton, Trueblood had run one of the most prominent schools of elocution in the country, starting in 1878 and continuing well into the twentieth century. He and Fulton were a veritable publishing and educational empire unto themselves and represented the very kind of instruction that many members of the new organization perceived themselves to be fighting against.<sup>25</sup>

Hence, there was from the very beginning of the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking a basic disagreement as to the purpose and direction of the field. All were agreed that public address – in the sense of public speaking – was central to the enterprise. Many, though not all, believed that public address – in the sense of the study of orators and oratory – was an important part of the field, even when such study was seen primarily as a resource for learning techniques that could then be emulated by students in their own public speaking. Great orators or famous speeches were most often seen as educational models that were studied for the sake of something else – giving good speeches of one’s own or providing material for oral reading – rather than as ends in themselves or objects of critical analysis. Examination of the books produced between 1900 and 1915 shows considerable interest in public address as a source of historical knowledge.<sup>26</sup> There was even one book – *The Battle of Principles: A Study of the Heroism and Eloquence of the Anti-Slavery Conflict* (1912), by Newell Dwight Hillis, D.D. – that might be described as a rhetorical history, by which I mean a history told through the lens of the great speeches, arguments, and debates of the era.<sup>27</sup>

## From Public Speaking to Speech

The battle between those who, like Woolbert, wanted the field of public speaking to become a scientific enterprise and those who, like Hunt, wanted it to become a liberal arts discipline was never fully resolved. In the end, it was the views of men such as O’Neill and Merry that prevailed, with the adoption of “speech” as a covering term that included both the scientific enterprise and the liberal arts courses. Most of the early departments of public speaking offered course work in both science and art, and this mixed model became the standard of the early graduate programs at places such as Iowa, Minnesota, Southern California, and Wisconsin.

The earliest issues of *QJPS* show that the study of orators and oratory was present, but not a major focus of published scholarship. Indeed, in the period from 1915 to 1920, the journal published only five articles – out of a total of 187 – that

represented the emerging public address tradition, understood as the critical examination and analysis of speakers, speeches, audiences, occasions, and the interactions among them. In 1916, J. M. Doyle published an analysis of “The Style of Wendell Phillips”; in 1917, H. B. Gislason published “Elements of Objectivity in Wendell Phillips”; in 1918, Edwin Du Bois Shurter published “The Rhetoric of Oratory and How to Teach It”; in 1919, Charles F. Lindsley published “George William Curtis: A Study in the Style of Oral Discourse”; and, in 1920, Lindsley published another article on “Henry Woodfin Grady, Orator.” But the simple fact that such studies could appear so soon after the founding of the association was a sign that public address studies had been going on for some time.

As early as 1884, newspaper editor C. M. Whitman had published a book on *American Orators and Oratory* that was comprised of “biographical sketches of the representative men of America, together with gems of eloquence upon leading questions that have occupied public attention from the foundation of the republic to the present time.”<sup>28</sup> In 1894, Cornelius Beach Bradley, Professor of Rhetoric at the University of California, published *Orations and Arguments by English and American Statesmen*. This book might well be considered the first scholarly textbook on public address, as that term would come to be understood in the Speech discipline. Not only did Bradley reprint complete speech texts, but he also appended substantive notes to each speech that explained the context and annotated the content. This was followed, in 1895, by the mistitled but nonetheless substantive *History of Oratory from the Age of Pericles to the Present Time*, by Lorenzo Sears, Professor of English Literature at Brown University. Sears’s book was, in fact, a history of rhetorical precepts, not oratory. As such, it was the most authoritative text of its day. In 1898, Ralph Curtis Ringwalt, Lecturer in Rhetoric at Columbia University, produced *Modern American Oratory* in which he discussed deliberative, forensic, demonstrative, and pulpit oratory, and provided examples of each.

Several individuals who would play a role in the early years of the national association were also active at the turn of the century. In 1899, A. H. Craig and Binney Gunnison published *Pieces for Prize Speaking Contests*. In 1901, Edwin Du Bois Shurter, Professor of Oratory at the University of Texas, produced *The Modern American Speaker*, followed in 1903 by *Public Speaking: A Treatise on Delivery, with Selections for Declaiming*, and *Masterpieces of Modern Oratory* in 1906. In 1907, Robert I. Fulton, Thomas C. Trueblood, and Edwin P. Trueblood edited *Standard Selections*, a collection of readings for use in the classroom. In 1908, Shurter produced *Oratory of the South, from the Civil War to the Present Time*, which reprinted significant speeches, and followed that in 1909 with *The Rhetoric of Oratory*, a college-level textbook. In his introductory essay, Shurter noted:

Oral discourse has a rhetoric of its own which should not be neglected in the work of instruction in English composition. Many schools and colleges, where no separate department of oratory exists, have recognized the distinction by establishing chairs of “rhetoric and oratory.” But oral discourse receives scant attention in treatises on

rhetoric; the subject of Persuasion is usually treated in a single chapter, or not at all; and in the schools generally oratorical composition finds little or no part in the work of instruction in English composition.<sup>29</sup>

This complaint would, of course, become one of the central arguments on behalf of forming a new scholarly organization only a few years later. In 1910, Shurter produced *American Oratory To-day* and edited *The Complete Orations and Speeches of Henry W. Grady*. Fulton and Trueblood edited *British and American Eloquence* in 1912, a collection that in addition to reprinting speech selections also included extended biographical portraits of each speaker. As many of these titles indicate, most of these works were intended as models for oral reading. The critical impulse was not yet much in evidence, but it was beginning to form. As early as 1913, Fulton, who taught at Ohio Wesleyan, presented a paper at the NCTE that envisioned courses in “Oratory,” “Rhetorical Criticism,” and an “Oratorical Seminar.”<sup>30</sup> Fulton may, in fact, have been the first person in the field to use the term “rhetorical criticism,” a locution that surfaced occasionally over the first 50 years of the association, but which did not come into widespread usage until the 1960s.

The story of the period between 1899 (when Winans went to Cornell) and 1914 (when the national association was founded) is a narrative with multiple plots – the rise of the English department as the custodian of Oral English, the reduction of rhetorical instruction to matters of grammar and composition, the widespread influence of the elocutionary movement, the beginnings of intercollegiate debate as a curricular offering, the interest in speeches primarily as models for emulation or source material for elocution, and the movement away from declamation and toward public speaking. It would, in fact, be the need to theorize and teach public speaking and argumentation that would drive the field for the next two decades. Most of the publication that took place between 1914 and 1934 was in the form of textbooks. Space does not allow a detailed description of those works, even though many were penned by the founders of the public address tradition, including Winans, Woolbert, and O’Neill.<sup>31</sup> Until 1920, the term “public address” usually referred to the teaching of public speaking, the study of model speeches, or the oral declamation of great literature, only some of which was oratorical. After the 1920s, the term would have an entirely different connotation, taking on the sense of critical analysis and evaluation of spoken discourse. The beginning of that transformation can be traced to a single course offered at Cornell.

### **Cornell University and the Classical Seminar of 1920–1921**

By 1920, the name “Speech” was beginning to emerge from the plethora of departmental titles as the preferred name for the field that had previously been known as Oral English or Public Speaking. The first evidence of this change came in 1918, when the journal changed its title from the *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* to

the *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education*. In 1923, the organization would follow by changing its name to the National Association of Teachers of Speech. Speech was seen as a broader term than Public Speaking – broad enough to encompass speech correction, phonology, speech science, language behavior, persuasion, argumentation, dramatic arts, oral reading, rhetoric, public address, and more – and university education (not the public platform) was understood as the primary arena of action. By 1920, departments associated with the national organization were in existence at scores of colleges and universities around the country, but graduate education was severely limited. Only a handful of programs had awarded the MA degree before 1920.<sup>32</sup> There were no PhDs being offered in the field of Speech.

Although the first PhD in Speech would be awarded in 1922 at the University of Wisconsin, that degree was in speech science, not public address.<sup>33</sup> The doctorates held by the founders of the public address tradition were earned in fields other than Speech, and several of them were inspired by a single graduate seminar held at Cornell University in the 1920–1921 academic year. That seminar, believed to be the first graduate course on classical rhetoric ever held in twentieth-century America, involved at least five people: Alexander M. Drummond, Everett Lee Hunt, Hoyt H. Hudson, Harry Caplan, and Herbert A. Wichelns.<sup>34</sup> These five men became the progenitors of what would come to be called the Cornell School of Rhetoric. Drummond had earned his PhD in 1918 in the field of English, with an emphasis in drama; Hunt earned an MA in Philosophy from the University of Chicago in 1922, never earning the PhD; Hudson earned the PhD at Cornell in 1923 under the classicist Lane Cooper in the department of English Literature; Harry Caplan also studied under Cooper, earning his PhD in Classics in 1921; and Wichelns took his PhD in English Literature in 1922.

Although the teachers and graduates of Cornell were primarily noted for their contributions to the history and theory of rhetoric, with Hunt, Hudson, and Caplan making major contributions to this area, one of the members of this early seminar, Herbert Wichelns, would make his mark in the tradition of public address. That tradition had, by the mid-1920s, been represented only sporadically within the pages of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education*, primarily by the work of Charles F. Lindsley of the University of Minnesota. While the early 1920s found very few published studies that could be considered part of the public address tradition, several MA theses were being written that clearly reflected the mounting interest in public address. At Cornell, these were completed on “Edmund Burke, The Rhetorician” (Robert Hannah, 1922), “The Rhetorical Practice of Abraham Lincoln” (Marvin Bauer, 1924), “The Rhetorical Practice of John Donne in His Sermons” (Charles Kenneth Thomas, 1924), and “A Study of the Structure of a Selected Group of Webster’s Speeches” (Howard Bradley, 1927). At Illinois, in 1923, Florence G. Weaver became the first woman to complete an MA thesis in public address on “John Randolph of Roanoke.” Ironically, the study was directed by Woolbert, the leading advocate of a “scientific” approach to speech.

By 1923, Wichelns was calling for more research and suggesting the need for comprehensive bibliographies for each part of the field. There had been no effort

to conceptualize a method for the study of public address beyond Wichelns's observation that "Gayley and Scott's *Methods and Materials in the Study of Criticism* is, after twenty years, still a useful, indeed an indispensable work."<sup>35</sup> The book by Charles Mills Gayley and Fred Newton Scott to which Wichelns referred was one of the early textbooks on literary criticism, published in 1899. Literary criticism and history were coming into their own in the latter part of the nineteenth century, with major works by such figures as Matthew Arnold, Henry Home of Kames, and William Dean Howells being widely read. By the 1890s textbooks in literary criticism were beginning to appear, and the text by Gayley and Scott was part of that trend.<sup>36</sup> Doubtless spurred on by the Gayley and Scott volume, Wichelns first turned to the literary critics, only to find them wanting. They were concerned with literature, seldom with oratory. So Wichelns set about the task of doing for oratory what Gayley and Scott had done for the study of literature. It would start in 1925 with the publication of "The Literary Criticism of Oratory," penned by Wichelns as his contribution to a *Festschrift* honoring James A. Winans. The book, *Studies in Rhetoric and Public Speaking in Honor of James Albert Winans*, was edited by Alexander M. Drummond, with contributions from Hunt, Caplan, Hannah, Hudson, Theodore Thorson Stenberg, Wichelns, Wayland Maxfield Parrish, Lee S. Hultzen, Smiley Blanton, Margaret Gray Blanton, and William E. Utterback. But it was the chapter by Wichelns that would lay the foundation for a whole field of study – public address criticism.

Much has been written about Wichelns's famous essay. It has been analyzed, critiqued, and reproduced in numerous anthologies. Wichelns began his chapter by pointing out that there had not been "much serious criticism of oratory." His survey of nineteenth-century literary critics found few who dealt at all with oratory, fewer still who treated oratory as something qualitatively different than literature, and only a handful of works whose standards of judgment seemed to him appropriate for an activity that was "partly an art, partly a power of making history, and occasionally a branch of literature."<sup>37</sup> This state of affairs he sought to correct. His goal was to put rhetorical studies on a par with literary studies as an arena of academic interest and research.

Wichelns believed that for oratory to be taken seriously as an academic subject, it had to be treated in a serious manner. Seriousness meant, among other things, that it had to be subjected to criticism and analysis in much the same manner as enduring works of literature. But Wichelns understood that while the tools of literary analysis were necessary – and perhaps even sufficient – for the student of oratory, the ends of great literature and the means of judging imaginative works were insufficient for the analysis of public speech. Because oratory was "intimately associated with statecraft," it could be understood and appreciated "only by the careful student of history."<sup>38</sup> In short, oratory operated in the real world, not the imaginative; it dealt with real people and events, not characters and plots; it had real and sometimes enduring consequences for the lives of people, not merely momentary flights into fantasy or make-believe. While oratory was a language art, it was also more. It was a power used to shape decision-making and influence decision-makers. It was,

as Aristotle had said about rhetoric, part of the ethical branch of politics, the branch concerned with making decisions about the nature of the good in community.

Wichelns had precious little upon which to build. Among nineteenth-century commentators, he found only the work of Chauncey Goodrich to have “critical significance” for the analysis of oratory. Hence his task was to construct a framework within which scholars of public address could subject oratory to the same sort of analysis that literary scholars accorded to works of fiction. Wichelns held that “the man, his works, his times” were the necessary “common topics” of criticism, and that “no one of them can be wholly disregarded by any critic.” Working from this foundational principle, Wichelns sought to distinguish oratorical or rhetorical criticism from its literary counterpart. “Rhetorical criticism,” he wrote, “is not concerned with permanence, nor yet with beauty. It is concerned with effect. It regards a speech as a communication to a specific audience, and holds its business to be the analysis and appreciation of the orator’s method of imparting his ideas to his hearers.”<sup>39</sup> These three sentences, which would become the source of much misunderstanding and misapplication of Wichelns’s ideas, became the theoretical stance from which 40 years of work in public address criticism flowed. But this was not all that Wichelns offered. He also articulated a 15-point scheme for what “a rhetorical study includes.” This scheme included:

- 1 The speaker’s personality as a conditioning factor.
- 2 The public character of the man – what he was thought to be.
- 3 A description of the audience.
- 4 The leading ideas with which he plied his hearers.
- 5 The topics he drew upon.
- 6 The motives to which he appealed.
- 7 Proofs offered in his speeches.
- 8 The relation of surviving texts to what was actually uttered.
- 9 The adaptation to two audiences – that which heard and that which read.
- 10 The speaker’s mode of arranging ideas.
- 11 The speaker’s mode of expression.
- 12 The speaker’s habits of preparation.
- 13 The manner of delivery from the platform.
- 14 The speaker’s style, especially diction and sentence movement.
- 15 The effect of the discourse on its immediate hearers.<sup>40</sup>

It is unclear from Wichelns’s essay whether he expected every rhetorical study to touch upon all 15 of these points. What is clear is that he never intended to reduce the study of oratory to the single question of its effect on the immediate audience. Indeed, had there been a systematic development of Wichelns’s 15 points, the practice of oratorical criticism might have evolved in significantly different directions than it did.

From 1925 to 1934, there was little advance in either the theory or practice of rhetorical criticism, but there was a major development. In 1925, Professor A. Craig



James Otis	Henry Clay	Henry Cabot Lodge
John Adams	John C. Calhoun	Woodrow Wilson
Patrick Henry	Daniel Webster	Theodore Roosevelt
Thomas Jefferson	James Buchanan	Booker T. Washington
Alexander Hamilton	Edward Everett	William Jennings Bryan
Fisher Ames	Rufus Choate	William E. Borah
John Randolph	William H. Seward	
	Ralph Waldo Emerson	
	William Lloyd Garrison	
	Jefferson Davis	
	Abraham Lincoln	
	Wendell Phillips	
	Henry Ward Beecher	
	Stephen A. Douglas	
	Charles Sumner	
	George W. Curtis	
	Carl Schurz	
	James G. Blaine	
	Ralph G. Ingersoll	
	Grover Cleveland	
	Thomas B. Reed	
	Elihu Root	
	Henry W. Grady	

**Figure 1.1**

Baird of Bates College moved to the University of Iowa. Baird had earned the MA in 1912 from Columbia University in English Literature, his thesis on Chaucer.<sup>41</sup> But under his leadership, the study of public address would blossom, and Iowa, along with Cornell and Wisconsin, would become a major center of rhetorical studies. The list of graduate students advised by Baird reads like a *Who's Who* of rhetorical studies in the middle part of the twentieth century – William Norwood Brigance, Lester W. Thonssen, Loren Reid, Carroll Arnold, Waldo Braden, Earnest Brandenburg, Laura Crowell, Gregg Phifer, and Robert C. Jeffrey, to mention only the most prominent. In 1926, Baird published “A Selected Bibliography of American Oratory,” thus fulfilling one of Wichelns’s 1923 recommendations. Baird divided the bibliography into General References, which included several of the multi-volume works noted earlier, and works on 36 specific orators (see Figure 1.1).

Unsurprisingly, the list was dominated by powerful white males, mostly from the nineteenth century. This bibliography was the first sort of “to do” list produced by scholars of public address. It was noteworthy in several ways, not the least of which was its focus on speakers rather than speeches, events, movements, or genres. Public address was, from 1925 to 1950, to be primarily the study of orators.<sup>42</sup>

In 1928, Warren Choate Shaw, Professor of Public Speaking at Knox College, produced a *History of American Oratory*. This was the first comprehensive history of oratorical practice produced by a member of the Speech field. In his preface,

Shaw noted “the urgent necessity of providing for teachers and students of oratory just such a background of history as is provided so lavishly for teachers and students of composition and English literature in its written form.”<sup>43</sup> To accomplish this goal, Shaw organized each chapter by speaker, with short sections on the general background of the period, the biography of the speaker, the historical setting of a particularly important speech, the reprinting of that speech text – sometimes in full, often only in part – and a comprehensive bibliography. Shaw’s 713-page tome covered Patrick Henry, Alexander Hamilton, Fisher Ames, John Randolph, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, Thomas Corwin, Theodore Parker, Rufus Choate, Stephen A. Douglas, Charles Sumner, Wendell Phillips, Abraham Lincoln, Henry Ward Beecher, Robert G. Ingersoll, Henry W. Grady, William Jennings Bryan, Albert J. Beveridge, Theodore Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson. There was little evidence that Shaw had been influenced by Wichelns’s essay on critical method. His list of notable orators does, however, bear a striking resemblance to the list produced by Baird two years earlier, perhaps suggesting the emergence of a sort of widely accepted canon of orators by the late 1920s. This canon would have a profound effect on one of Baird’s first PhD students, William Norwood Brigance.

## **Setting the Agenda**

Having earned his MA degree in history in 1920 from the University of Nebraska, Brigance began his career as a speech teacher in 1922 at Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana. Although he had minimal formal training in speech, Brigance believed that he could fill the bill and began what would be a 38-year career as a Speech professor. Like many professionals of his day, he was told that he needed to complete the PhD if he wanted to be promoted. In 1929, he left Crawfordsville and journeyed to Iowa City, where he spent the next nine months taking coursework and completing his dissertation on Jeremiah Sullivan Black, under the direction of A. Craig Baird. His degree was awarded in June 1930, making Brigance the second person to earn the PhD in Speech at Iowa, and the first to do so in public address.<sup>44</sup>

Brigance led a decade in which some of the leading scholars of public address would emerge, most of them coming out of Iowa, Wisconsin, Cornell, or Michigan – Lester Thonssen (1931), Loren Reid and Henry Lee Ewbank (1932), Lionel Crocker and Karl R. Wallace (1933), Horace Rahskopf and James H. McBurney (1935), Marvin Bauer (1936), Robert T. Oliver and Kenneth G. Hance (1937), Dallas C. Dickey and Dayton David McKean (1938), among others. The numbers were small – very small. Between 1930 and 1945, the three schools that produced the most MA and PhD students in Speech were Iowa, Wisconsin, and Cornell.<sup>45</sup> Yet, close examination of the theses and dissertations produced in this 15-year period reveals a startling fact: As a percentage of graduate degrees completed, studies in public address never comprised more than 13 percent of the whole. Most of

Iowa, 1930–1945	Wisconsin, 1930–1945	Cornell, 1930–1945
409 MA degrees in Speech	170 MA degrees in Speech	107 MA degrees in Speech
45 theses on Public Address	21 theses on Public Address	2 theses on Public Address
66 PhD degrees in Speech	64 PhD degrees in Speech	36 PhD degrees in Speech
17 dissertations on Public Address	18 dissertations on Public Address	2 dissertations on Public Address

Figure 1.2

the graduate degrees completed in this era were in dramatic arts, speech correction, and language behavior. Even within the world of rhetorical studies, there were far more theses and dissertations dealing with some aspect of rhetorical theory or the history of rhetoric than there were those examining public address. Figure 1.2 is illustrative.

As these numbers clearly show, the study of public address was a small part of a much larger whole. Throughout the period from 1930 to 1945, most universities that taught Speech employed only one specialist in public address. Consequently, most of the PhDs produced during this period can be traced back to a single advisor – A. Craig Baird at Iowa, Henry Lee Ewbank at Wisconsin, or Herbert A. Wichelns at Cornell. These three men produced the vast majority of the dissertations noted above, which is to say that they produced most of the next generation of leaders in public address scholarship. No single person was more crucial to the development of that scholarship than W. Norwood Brigance.

Brigance wrote the most important article following Wichelns’s 1925 masterpiece when, in 1933, he published “Whither Research?” In that article, Brigance set forth an agenda, the complete fulfillment of which has not been accomplished to this day. His article foreshadowed the treatment of speeches as a form of rhetorical literature, and his understanding of the audience – and particularly of rhetorical constraints – foreshadowed Lloyd Bitzer’s explication in 1968. He also was concerned with textual authenticity, insisted on primary source research, and called for an understanding of speech content as ideas that have force in history and through time. Not all of these ideas were developed in depth, but they were all present in this one article.

Brigance began by stating that he was “writing this article in an attempt to hasten the coming out [from the intellectual wilderness] and to suggest one of several possible directions which research should next take.” He then wrote, “I think we ought to recognize that there is a great body of rhetorical or oratorical literature almost untouched by scholars in our field. Of it, I think we might safely say that this literature can do without our scholarship, but that our scholarship cannot do without that literature.”<sup>46</sup>

Brigance also concerned himself with the rhetorical situation, writing, “The statesman who must dominate a crisis, or the advocate who must mold the mind of

a court or jury ... must seize the hour, strike the iron at white heat, adapt himself to the mind, mood, and temperature of the audience and occasion. It is impossible ever to read their speech apart from the hopes, fears, prejudices, and passions that beset the hearers at the moment of delivery."<sup>47</sup> Even more clearly than Wichelns, Brigance located rhetoric as the contingent art of adapting discourse to audiences in the immediate situation. Many would repeat Brigance's ideas after 1933, but few would put them into practice.

Brigance closed "Whither Research?" by noting, "Commonly we are content to edit what other biographers and essayists have said. But this is mere rewriting. We must, if we expect recognition of our scholarship, go to the records themselves. We must examine first-hand the manuscripts, letters, documents, and read again the newspapers, periodicals and memoirs of that period."<sup>48</sup> This was the culmination of all the calls for research, making of bibliographies, and reporting of individual projects that occupied the pages of the journal between 1925 and 1930. In the end, it all came down to the admonition to do research in primary sources – something that virtually no one in the area of public address was doing in 1933. But that was about to change.

In the fall of 1934, Brigance was appointed to lead the association's Committee on Joint Research in the History of American Oratory.<sup>49</sup> Over the course of the next nine years, Brigance and his committee would strive to give form to many of the ideas he had expressed in "Whither Research?" The result, both for better and for worse, was the first two volumes of *A History and Criticism of American Public Address*, published by McGraw-Hill in 1943. At the time of his appointment, Brigance was 38 years old, making him one of the youngest members of the editorial committee. But his appointment was more than justified, for not only had he set forth the agenda in his 1933 article, but he had also published, in 1934, one of the first scholarly books produced by a member of the Speech profession, a rhetorical biography titled *Jeremiah Sullivan Black: Defender of the Constitution and the Ten Commandments*.<sup>50</sup>

That a concerted effort was needed to advance oratorical and public address scholarship was clear. From the publication of Wichelns's essay in 1925 through the publication of *A History and Criticism of American Public Address* in 1943, virtually no progress had been made in refining what it meant to be a public address scholar, even though the field had established a second journal, *Speech Monographs*, in 1932, with Wichelns as editor. During this period, there was a handful of articles that merited attention, but most of those were concerned with only three figures – Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.<sup>51</sup> The vast storehouse of "oratorical literature" of which Brigance wrote in 1933 remained largely untouched. But that would soon change.

Using Baird's bibliographical listing of 1926 as well as his own study of orators, Brigance and his committee identified "The Twenty-Eight Foremost American Orators."<sup>52</sup> Each of these 28 was then assigned to a scholar. Six synthetic essays on particular eras were also assigned, making a total of 34 chapters in volumes one and two of *A History and Criticism of American Public Address*. This was the first big,

multi-volume project undertaken by the national association. In many ways the sheer execution of the project – the conceptualization, planning, editing, and publishing – was an achievement unto itself, quite apart from the quality of the contents. Although later scholars would criticize these volumes as too historical in orientation, too methodologically monolithic, too focused on white males, too reliant on secondary sources, too concerned with the speaker's biography to the neglect of textual criticism, too committed to mainstream speakers and speeches, and too wed to effects on the immediate audience, the fact remains that these volumes represented the best public address scholarship published through 1943. Virtually all of those who published multiple public address studies in the 1930s – Mildred Freburg Berry, Lionel G. Crocker, Dayton David McKean, Wayland Maxfield Parrish, and Earl W. Wiley, chief among them – also appeared in this multi-volume set.

We must also remember what it meant to be a member of the Speech profession at this time. From its founding in 1914 through the publication of the Brigrance volumes in 1943, the profession was far broader and considerably more flexible than it is today. We remember Brigrance primarily as a public address scholar, but he also published widely in persuasion theory, language behavior, and speech correction. Early members of the field often specialized in several different aspects of Speech. Some members who made important contributions to public address when the field was young ended up making their primary reputations in other areas of the discipline. Mildred Freburg Berry and Wayland Maxfield Parrish were two such scholars. Berry wrote one of two chapters on Lincoln for *A History and Criticism of American Public Address*, but her scholarly reputation was made in the area of speech correction. Parrish was a Cornell-trained rhetorician who completed his 1929 dissertation on Whately's *Elements of Rhetoric*, but he made his reputation in the area of oral reading. In later years, Russell Wagner, Carroll Arnold, Ernest Bormann, and Edwin Black would do ground-breaking work in discussion; Robert T. Oliver would be the first in the field to do serious work in intercultural communication; and Walter Emery, who wrote the chapter on Samuel Gompers for the Brigrance volumes, made his career as a scholar of media. There were very few scholars who specialized *only* in public address from 1914 to 1943.

Even so, the 1940s was a time of great advance in public address scholarship, starting with the publication of Bower Aly's *The Rhetoric of Alexander Hamilton* (1941). The number of MA and PhD degrees started to increase, as did the quality of the people completing their doctoral degrees – Bower Aly, Glen Mills, and Ernest J. Wrage (1941), Carroll Arnold, William Behl, and Waldo Braden (1942), Marie Hochmuth (1945), S. Judson Crandell and Robert D. Clark (1946), J. Jeffrey Auer and Eugene E. White (1947), Earnest S. Brandenburg, Laura Crowell, Rollin Quimby, Barnet Baskerville, Frederick Haberman, Robert G. Gunderson (1948), and Gregg Phifer (1949). The nature of what constituted a public address study also began to expand. From the focus on single orators in *A History and Criticism of American Public Address*, scholarship started to appear on such topics as debates in Congress, multiple speeches across a single topic, the rhetorical

characteristics of democracy, critical analysis of written rhetoric, examination of single speeches, and criticism of rhetorical campaigns. The *Brigance* volumes were a high point in public address scholarship, but it is important to remember that even as they appeared in 1943, they were both a culmination of work that had gone on during the preceding decade (1934–1943) and a model for much of the work that would be undertaken for the next two decades (1944–1964). As such, they were in some senses anachronistic even as they were published.

Even in the immediate wake of publication, not everyone was enamored with the approach taken in the *Brigance* volumes. Two such critics were Loren Reid and Ernest Wrage. Writing in 1944, Reid warned of “The Perils of Rhetorical Criticism.” One such peril was the tendency merely to report historical and biographical data rather than to criticize the content of the speeches. “Although the reader needs to know what the speaker *said*,” wrote Reid, “he really seeks a critical judgment *about* the ideas of the speech.” Such critical judgment was to be based on detailed research of the speaking situation, research “not likely to come from a college history textbook, but from letters, diaries, memoirs, and periodicals, and sometimes from specialized monographs.” In short, Reid called for research in primary sources – the same call that *Brigance* had made in 1933. Reid also noted that from a methodological point of view, “Aristotelian rhetoric cannot be made to cover every aspect of all types of speaking.”<sup>53</sup> To produce good critical studies of public discourse was a demanding task. Neither second-hand history nor narrowly circumscribed rhetorical theory could produce the type of critical research needed to establish public address scholarship as significant. Reid closed by noting,

Rhetorical criticism is an exacting type of research. The critic must know what is commonly called rhetoric, but to know rhetoric is not enough. He must know historical methods, but to know historical methods is not enough. He must have infinite patience in the search for details. . . . He must have the imagination to recreate events and movements long since passed into time. And he must take to heart his primary and inescapable responsibility as a critic: to interpret, to appraise, to evaluate; to say here the speaker missed, here he hit the mark.<sup>54</sup>

While Reid’s critique of traditional public address studies was implicit, Ernest Wrage’s critique, written three years later in 1947, was explicit. Wrage attacked head-on the traditional paradigm of public address studies. “The prevailing approach to the history and criticism of public address appears to consist of a study of individual speakers for their influence upon history,” he wrote. “If one may judge from studies available through publication, they fall short of that ambitious goal.”<sup>55</sup> Instead of the traditional speaker-centered studies, Wrage argued for an “idea-centered” approach to public address. Such an approach would focus “upon the speech and its content” and yield “knowledge of more general interest in terms of man’s cultural strivings and heritage.” Wrage’s call for the serious study of speech content echoed a topic first broached by Hunt in 1922. Wrage was clearly correct in his judgment that “the rich vein of literature in speaking has hardly been tapped.”

But his call for “a wide investigation of sermons, lectures, and speeches related to issues, movements, and periods” was not immediately forthcoming. Wrage’s vision of studies in public address becoming “a kind of anthropological approach to a segment of cultural history” found few disciples before the mid-1960s, in part because the dominant paradigm had, in fact, become established not as *a* way of doing public address criticism, but as *the only way*.<sup>56</sup>

The paradigm established by the Brigrance studies was given formal explication in a 1947 article by Baird and Thonssen in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. One year later, they published the first textbook on critical analysis of public address – *Speech Criticism* – a text that would have a corner on the market until the mid-1960s, and go into a second edition in 1970. In their article, Baird and Thonssen took an expansive view of the scope of public address criticism, reflecting some of the changes since the early 1940s. They wrote:

The critical judgment may limit itself to a single speech, one that was delivered either last week or last century. Or the critic may enlarge the scope of his inquiry to encompass the entire speaking career of the orator; to evaluate a speaking movement, such as temperance reform; or to interpret a period of the history of public speaking. The problem, in any case, is that of pronouncing judgment.<sup>57</sup>

As expansive as Baird and Thonssen’s views were, they did not envision an expansion of public address beyond the confines of public speech or didactic written prose. Neither did they envision any kind of methodological advance beyond the traditional paradigm that characterized most of the studies in the Brigrance volumes. That paradigm, broadly construed as historical-rhetorical in orientation, resulted in a standard pattern followed by most analysts of public address from 1943 to 1964. In outline form, the paradigm looked like this:

- I. The speaker’s background
- II. The speaker’s ideas and their support
  - A. Premises and lines of argument
  - B. Proofs and refutation
- III. Speech Composition
  - A. Speech preparation
  - B. Organization
  - C. Language and style
- IV. Delivery

The widespread adoption of this procedure for analyzing public address had mixed results. On the one hand, it produced a great deal of information and, if properly pursued, virtually guaranteed that the researcher would be well versed in the topic at hand. Those earning degrees under Baird at Iowa, Wichelns at Cornell, Ewbank at Wisconsin, James McBurney or Wrage at Northwestern, or Kenneth Hance at Michigan were well-educated people, many of whom went on to distinguish themselves through their scholarship. On the other hand, in less well-trained hands, the

historical-rhetorical method could become mechanical, categorical, and wooden. It could substitute method for thought, and discourage innovation and insight by limiting the kinds of questions one might ask about a speaker, or text, or situation. Even as this paradigm was being enshrined by the Brigrance volumes and the Thonssen and Baird textbook, it started to come under scrutiny by scholars eager to expand both the scope and methods of rhetorical analysis.

With the publication in 1947 of S. Judson Crandell's essay on "The Beginnings of a Methodology for Social Control Studies in Public Address," serious thought started to be given to social movements, persuasive campaigns, and cultural ideals – and how such phenomena might best be studied by students of rhetoric and public address.<sup>58</sup> Judson's essay was followed, in 1952, by Leland Griffin's path-breaking article, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements." While Crandell and Griffin led the way into what would blossom into a long series of articles on various movements in the 1960s and early 1970s, Marie Hochmuth and Virginia Holland were introducing the field to the thought of Kenneth Burke, I. A. Richards, and other practitioners of what was called the "New Rhetoric." The old paradigm had positioned itself as grounded in Aristotle, even though many of the critical studies owed as much or more to Cicero than to the Stagirite. Now both the theoretical foundations and the analytical methods employed by the traditional paradigm were being challenged.

Even the effects standard of evaluation, ostensibly erected by Wichelns and practiced faithfully by public address critics thereafter, came under scrutiny. Wayland Maxfield Parrish, in an introductory essay to *American Speeches* (1954) titled "The Study of Speeches," argued that "rhetoric, strictly speaking, is not concerned with the effect of a speech, but with its quality, and its quality can be determined quite apart from its effect." Speeches, Parrish held, were to be judged by their internal artistic qualities, not their external effects. He noted that "many of the great speeches of history have been made in lost causes," and argued that "a speaker's success in achieving a desired response from his audience is not necessarily proof that he has spoken well, or his failure, that he has spoken ill."<sup>59</sup> Public address was an art and had to be evaluated by the standards of excellence peculiar to the art. That such internal artistic standards were poorly understood in the 1950s was a direct outcome of the failure to seriously analyze individual speech texts. Although the field had been called Speech for more than 30 years, almost no one studied discrete speeches. Instead, they studied speakers and speaking careers. The speeches themselves were often incidental to the criticism.

This problem can be seen even in volume three of *A History and Criticism of American Public Address*, edited by Marie Hochmuth in 1955. Even though scholars were starting to expand the scope of public address studies and were beginning to question the dominant paradigm, there was little evidence of this ferment in the Hochmuth volume. There were no Burkean or dramatistic studies, nothing informed by General Semantics or Richards's theory of metaphor, and no studies of social or historical movements. In short, there was little to distinguish volume three from its earlier predecessors. Some of the essays were exemplary for their



time – Carroll Arnold’s article on George William Curtis and Martin Maloney’s chapter on Clarence Darrow stood out. But the fact remained that every essay dealt with an individual speaker, most employed some brand of traditional, if not explicitly Aristotelian analysis, and all spent as much or more space on history and biography as in the act of speech criticism.

Even as the Hochmuth volume was replaying the past, other scholars were pushing the boundaries of public address criticism. For the first time, detailed studies of rhetorical texts, some oratorical and some nonoratorical, began to appear in print. Foremost among these were studies by Laura Crowell on Roosevelt’s “Four Freedoms” speech, Donald C. Bryant on Edmund Burke’s *Present Discontents*, and Eugene E. White on Cotton Mather’s *Manuductio ad Ministerium*. In addition to textual studies, 1955–1964 was the germination period for studies in the rhetoric of social movements generally and social protest rhetoric particularly. Genre studies of various sorts became more prominent as was the examination of speakers who were not white, Anglo-Saxon males, which had long been the preferred subject of analysis for the “Great Man” school of criticism. The traditional paradigm was beginning to show signs of weakening.

In 1956, Thomas R. Nilsen and Albert J. Croft called into question various aspects of the paradigm. For Nilsen, it was not the emphasis on the speech’s effect that was problematic, but the related assumption that effect was to be defined only in terms of the speaker’s purported purpose or aim. “It is the viewing of the social act, the speech, so predominantly from the point of view of the individual – the speaker and his purposes – rather than from the point of view of society and its purposes,” wrote Nilsen, “that has led to much of the conflict and confusion about effects as an object of criticism.”<sup>60</sup> Nilsen wanted to retain the effects criterion, but to redefine effect to refer to that which society viewed as good or desirable, not what the individual speaker sought to achieve. He thus offered “criteria for judgment” drawn from “the assumptions upon which our society is based.”<sup>61</sup> By relocating the locus of judgment from the individual to the collective and reconfiguring criticism as an essentially ethical act of judgment rather than a pragmatic act, Nilsen sought to establish social effect as the central criterion of speech criticism.

Albert Croft saw matters differently. To him, the problems of the traditional paradigm were considerably more severe than those identified by Nilsen. “Perhaps the chief problems of research in public address,” Croft wrote, “is that we have thought of it all as ‘criticism’ when some is really theory, some is history, and some is criticism which has not evaluated the speeches studied.”<sup>62</sup> The theory–criticism relationship was particularly problematic in the traditional paradigm, Croft held, because “criticism cannot alter theory; it can only use the existing forms.” Such criticism was static and treated rhetorical theory “as a closed, fixed system.” Such a view of the theory–criticism relationship led to a sort of cookie-cutter criticism, with the role of the critic being reduced to “finding illustrations of standard, pre-conceived forms.”<sup>63</sup> As unproductive as the standard theory–criticism relationship had been, Croft found the interaction of history and criticism even more delimiting.

The challenge was to bring history and criticism into proper relationship, one to the other, so that the central question of “audience adaptation” could be explored. Croft observed,

It is not enough to talk separately about the make-up of an audience at one point, about the main propositions of the speaker at another point, and about the speaker’s use of traditional rhetorical techniques at still another point. The main function of history and criticism is to show how propositions and audiences are *connected*: how a speaker uses techniques to adapt his ideas to his audiences.<sup>64</sup>

These criticisms, though ostensibly derived from examination of graduate theses, were also a telling indictment of critical scholarship as practiced in professional journals and textbooks.

Opposition to the reigning paradigm continued when, in 1957, Wrage edited a special issue of *Western Speech* on the subject of “Criticism and Public Address.” Essays by Thomas R. Nilsen, Joseph L. Blau, Donald C. Bryant, Robert D. Clark, Marie Hochmuth, W. Charles Redding, and Barnet Baskerville called into question several dimensions of the traditional paradigm – the focus on single speakers, the critical standard of effect on the immediate audience, the separation of pragmatic from ethical judgment, the bowdlerized Aristotelianism, the lack of symmetry between judgments of internal artistic integrity and external political results, and other equally problematic areas.<sup>65</sup>

Even as these debates were proceeding, the practice of public address criticism scored some significant advances. Griffin followed his path-breaking 1952 article on “The Rhetoric of Historical Movements” with an equally stunning application of that theory in “The Rhetorical Structure of the Antimasonic Movement,” published as a chapter in *The Rhetorical Idiom* (1958), a collection of essays edited by Donald C. Bryant and featuring graduates of the Cornell School of Rhetoric. Eugene E. White contributed a series of articles on George Whitefield and the Great Awakening. Robert T. Oliver wrote about the rhetoric of diplomacy and published books about his experiences in Korea as an advisor to Syngman Rhee. Ross Scanlan contributed a series of articles on Hitler and the Nazi Party, while Laura Crowell and Earnest Brandenburg continued their studies of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The decade from the mid-1940s through the mid-1950s also saw the publication of several books grounded in the analysis of public address, including Dallas C. Dickey’s *Sargent S. Prentiss, Whig Orator of the South* (1945), Robert T. Oliver’s *Four Who Spoke Out: Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Pitt* (1946), Robert D. Clark’s *The Life of Matthew Simpson* (1956), and Robert Gray Gunderson’s *The Log-Cabin Campaign* (1957).

By the end of the 1950s, the traditional paradigm was in deep trouble even as the practice of public address criticism was beginning to broaden. In addition to the programs at Iowa, Wisconsin, Cornell, and Michigan, other doctoral programs – some of which had been in existence for many years – started to produce graduates in public address, with Louisiana State, Northwestern, Illinois, and

Minnesota chief among them. Such outstanding scholars as Leland M. Griffin (1950), Donald K. Smith (1951), Paul H. Boase and Gordon L. Thomas (1952), Ernest G. Bormann and Anthony Hillbruner (1953), Ronald F. Reid and Wayne E. Brockriede (1954), Malcolm O. Sillars, Howard H. Martin, and Robert L. Scott (1955), Robert P. Newman (1956), Hermann G. Stelzner and Robert C. Jeffrey (1957), and Russel Windes, Jr. (1959) joined the ranks of those from the previous three decades to form a significant cadre of public address leadership. It was, in fact, from the ranks of those earning their degrees in the 1950s and 1960s that the new theories, methods, and practices of public address criticism would emerge. Even as the traditional paradigm was dying, the early 1960s saw several works published that drew heavily from that tradition. In 1961, Loren Reid edited *American Public Address: Studies in Honor of Albert Craig Baird*. This was followed by Marie Hochmuth Nichols's *Rhetoric and Criticism* (1963) and *Antislavery and Disunion, 1858–1861* (1963), edited by J. Jeffrey Auer. In 1965, Robert Oliver published *History of Public Speaking in America*, the first comprehensive survey of American public address since Shaw's 1928 volume. All of these works were outstanding examples of the traditional paradigm at its peak. But the tradition which had been monolithic from 1925 to 1955 had reached its zenith. By 1965, it would start its descent.

### **Edwin Black and *Rhetorical Criticism*: A Study in Method**

Although Black's *Rhetorical Criticism* carries a copyright date of 1965, it is important to remember that the book was originally a dissertation completed at Cornell University in 1962, under the direction of Herbert A. Wichelns. It thus represented the thinking of the late 1950s and early 1960s, as revised for publication in 1965.<sup>66</sup> The book had an immediate – and in some ways devastating – influence on both the theory and practice of public address criticism. Yet the disease had already been diagnosed and various prescriptions for cure offered before the publication of Black's book. In a sense, Black reaped where others had sown. He did so for several reasons. His was the first book-length analysis of (some would say assault on) the tradition. He not only diagnosed the problems, he also offered potential solutions. And he did this in a writing style that was at once incisive, witty, clear, and logically compelling. Newly hooded, Dr. Black took scalpel in hand and proceeded to dissect 40 years of public address scholarship. That he did this under the influence and guidance of Wichelns was a historical irony of no small note.

*Rhetorical Criticism* was a small book that carried a huge impact. In six brief chapters, Black laid out his definition of criticism, his view of how rhetorical criticism had been practiced traditionally, the relation of rhetoric to criticism, the uses of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in the practice of criticism, an "alternative" frame of reference, and a final chapter on "the Genre of Argumentation." Black wasted no time in pointing out the faults of what he called "neo-Aristotelianism":

The neo-Aristotelians ignore the impact of the discourse on rhetorical conventions, its capacity for disposing an audience to expect certain ways of arguing and certain kinds of justifications in later discourses that they encounter, even on different subjects. Similarly, the neo-Aristotelian critics do not account for the influence of the discourse on its author: the future commitments it makes for him, rhetorically and ideologically; the public image it portrays to which he must adjust.<sup>67</sup>

Black went even further, chastising the traditional critics for viewing discourses as discrete entities, for their interest in immediate effects only, for the linearity of conception – from speaker’s background to message construction to audience effect – implied in traditional analysis, for the tendency to reduce the realm of rhetoric to oratory only, and for the assumption of audience rationality implicit in the traditional paradigm.

The extent to which the traditional paradigm influenced the field, even as late as 1965, is revealed by Black’s attempt to describe two other extant approaches to rhetorical texts – movement criticism and psychological criticism. Movement studies had made some small degree of progress by 1965, due largely to the work of another Cornell graduate, Leland Griffin. The so-called psychological study, however, was barely discernible, even in outline. Black cited but one instance of a psychological criticism in the speech literature and even that instance seems, in retrospect, suspect. Nevertheless, Black was on to something. He realized that psychological criticism could be a potent tool in the arsenal of the rhetorical critic if it could be made to comment on the “discourse-as-communication” rather than on the “discourse-as-symptom” of some hidden reality. Black noted that there was “no system of analysis or body of techniques available to the critic for the reliable psychological examination of argumentative strategies or discursive texture,” yet he was convinced that precisely that kind of examination was necessary for “full disclosure” – the goal of all criticism.<sup>68</sup> Previewing what such a system of analysis might look like, Black wrote,

We are compelled to believe in the existence of relationships between a man’s deepest motives and his discourses. Such a conviction is bound up with the very ways we have of talking about human motives. The mystery lies in the identification of those characteristics of discourse which reveal motive, for we know that motive only rarely receives a full and direct expression.<sup>69</sup>

Black would spend the next 40 years working out an approach to rhetorical criticism that revealed “those characteristics of discourse which reveal motive,” but in 1965 it was only a vision of a type of criticism that did not then exist in the field of Speech. But it would not take forty years for Black’s influence to be felt. In the wake of *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method*, public address scholars suddenly found themselves in a world where not only the historical-rhetorical method was challenged, but the very assumptions about language, thought, discourse, and audiences upon which that method had been erected were challenged as well. The results of this change included a movement from speech to rhetoric (as controlling term), from history to criticism (as type of scholarly activity), from one monolithic method to multiple methods or perspectives (each with potentially equal credibility), from conscious attempts to

achieve critical objectivity to conscious celebration of critical subjectivity (as acknowledgment of the radical situatedness of all knowledge claims), from reporters and compilers of data to interpreters and analyzers of data (with a radical expansion of what counted as “data” for the rhetorical critic), and from a predominant focus on style and delivery to a primary focus on strategy (or movement from a focus on the text or speaker to a focus on the critic and his or her interpretive powers).

## Toward Critical Pluralism

The fact that the traditional paradigm was already in the process of crumbling helped to explain the immediate impact of Black’s book. So, too, did the historical moment of its appearance – in the middle of the most tumultuous decade of the twentieth century. It was a moment of change on many fronts as antiwar, women’s liberation, black power, civil rights, and gay liberation movements all converged between 1965 and 1970. For public address scholars such changes and movements were reflected in the topics studied, the methods of analysis employed, and the sense of release or freedom from what was increasingly viewed as an anachronistic and flawed critical tradition.

The pages of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* and *Speech Monographs* reflected these forces. Topics became more diverse. Studies of persuasive discourses other than speeches and didactic essays began to appear. Movement studies became more frequent, and names other than Leland Griffin started to be associated with movement criticism. The rhetoric of contemporary social protest – observable every day in the streets of America – started to be studied as an academic specialty, with critics such as Franklyn S. Haiman, Parke Burgess, Robert L. Scott, Donald K. Smith, James R. Andrews, and Richard B. Gregg writing major essays during the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1971, John Waite Bowers and Donovan J. Ochs produced *The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control*, the first book-length theoretical treatment of protest rhetoric. Of equal importance, the methods of analysis started to change. Spurred on, in 1968, by a wide-ranging essay on “The Anatomy of Critical Discourse” by Lawrence W. Rosenfield and a clear articulation of “The Rhetorical Situation” by Lloyd F. Bitzer, critics began to find or invent new ways of analyzing rhetorical discourse: genre criticism, analog criticism, mythic criticism, phenomenological criticism, psychological criticism, metaphoric and archetypal criticism, stylistic criticism, dramatistic criticism, fantasy-theme analysis, model criticism, structuralist criticism, feminist criticism, and the list goes on. Suddenly, there seemed to be no end to available critical approaches and few boundaries as to what constituted a study in “public address.”

Vestiges of the old paradigm remained, but they were few. Anthony Hillbruner published *Critical Dimensions: The Art of Public Address Criticism* (1966), the most complete statement on the traditional paradigm since Thonssen and Baird’s *Speech Criticism* in 1948. Lionel Crocker contributed *Rhetorical Analysis of Speeches* (1967). And Loren Reid produced a masterful rhetorical biography on *Charles James Fox: A Man for the People* (1969). But even the titles betrayed a tradition

now past. DeWitte Holland made an important contribution by editing volumes on *Preaching in American History* (1969), *Sermons in American History* (1971), and *America in Controversy* (1973), while Waldo Braden added a volume on *Oratory in the Old South, 1828–1860* (1970). But merely applying the traditional understanding to new eras or artifacts was not enough to save it. As the decade of the 1970s dawned, several new textbooks and anthologies on criticism appeared, each eschewing the old paradigm for more contemporary approaches. Chief among these were Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's *Critiques of Contemporary Rhetoric* (1972), Robert L. Scott and Bernard L. Brock's *Rhetorical Criticism: A Twentieth-Century Perspective* (1972), and a critical anthology, *Explorations in Rhetorical Criticism* (1973), edited by G. P. Mohrmann, Charles J. Stewart, and Donovan J. Ochs. These books featured multiple perspectives, including mythic and archetypal criticism, dramatic criticism, social movement criticism, stylistic criticism, argumentative analysis, fantasy-theme analysis, and more. In 1974, Carroll Arnold tried to revive the Aristotelian tradition with *Criticism of Oral Rhetoric*, but the field was not much interested in thinking about the distinctions between orality and literature – the very distinction that had led to its birth 60 years earlier.

The period from 1965 to 1980 was one of unprecedented growth and change, both in terms of the objects of criticism and in terms of the methods or approaches used by critics to analyze and evaluate those objects. Before the middle 1960s, scholars engaged in what they called “speech criticism” or the “criticism of public address”; after 1965, the term of choice became “rhetorical criticism.” The change was meant to connote several things, not the least of which was that prior to 1965 it was unusual to find a study concerned with anything other than oratory or didactic literature – pamphlets, tracts, broadsides, instruction manuals, and the like. After 1965, such studies became commonplace, with analyses of various “non-oratorical forms” regularly appearing in print. The leaders of this sea change in public address studies were an amazing cohort of scholars, most of whom earned their doctoral degrees between 1960 and 1970. This group included Wil A. Linkugel and Walter R. Fisher (1960), Herbert W. Simons and Jane Blankenship (1961), Edwin Black, Harry P. Kerr, and G. P. Mohrmann (1962), Richard B. Gregg, Michael Osborn, Lawrence W. Rosenfield, and Charles J. Stewart (1963), Theodore O. Windt (1965), Thomas W. Benson, Ronald Carpenter, and James R. Andrews (1966), Cal Logue (1967), Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, Philip C. Wander, and Andrew A. King (1968), Martha Solomon and Craig R. Smith (1969), and Roderick P. Hart and Bruce E. Gronbeck (1970). So rapidly did this change overtake the field that as early as 1970, conferees at the National Developmental Conference on Rhetoric could conclude:

Rhetorical criticism is to be identified by the kinds of questions posed by the critic. . . . The critic becomes rhetorical to the extent that he studies his subject in terms of its suasive potential or persuasive effect. So identified, rhetorical criticism may be applied to any human act, process, product, or artifact which, in the critic's view, may formulate, sustain, or modify attention, perceptions, attitudes or behavior.<sup>70</sup>

Clearly this view of criticism's scope and responsibilities went far beyond anything contemplated by traditional scholars of public address. Yet it was precisely the limitations imposed by the tradition that motivated the conferees. As they noted in the same report: "Much of our theory has presupposed formal platform speaking and has thereby ignored a multitude of presentational and transactional possibilities."<sup>71</sup> Starting in the late 1960s and extending throughout the decades of the 1970s and 1980s, those "possibilities" were thoroughly explored. In 1968, Philip K. Tompkins explored the rhetoric of novelist James Joyce; in 1969, James R. Andrews looked at "Confrontation at Columbia"; in 1970, Robert Rutherford Smith examined the radio broadcasts of Raymond Swing, and John Angus Campbell wrote about Darwin's *Origins of Species*; in 1971, Jimmie Rogers and Theodore Clevenger examined the CBS television documentary "The Selling of the Pentagon," while Roderick P. Hart was writing about the "Rhetoric of the True Believer"; in 1972, Malcolm O. Sillars studied the "Rhetoric of the Petition in Boots"; in 1973, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell analyzed the "Rhetoric of Women's Liberation"; and, in 1974, Thomas W. Benson explored autobiography as a form of rhetoric, using *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* as a case study. No longer were speeches the privileged – or even preferred – focus of scholarly study. Critics could study virtually any symbolic form – and they did.

All of this was too much for some of the more established scholars, particularly those committed to the traditional paradigm. Two voices, in particular, stood out. Donald C. Bryant had earned his PhD at Cornell in 1937. By the 1970s, Bryant had long been one of the true giants of the field, having published ground-breaking articles on the nature and scope of rhetoric and on Edmund Burke.<sup>72</sup> In 1973, Bryant published *Rhetorical Dimensions in Criticism*. In this slim volume, he criticized the expansion of the scope for rhetorical studies and explicitly noted, "I do not find it fruitful, even if plausible, to enlarge the rhetorical to comprehend all symbolic interaction, by whatever vehicle communicated. Nor do I find it fruitful or plausible to extend the rhetorical dimensions to encompass all kinds of study of all kinds and vehicles of symbolic interaction."<sup>73</sup> Bryant's concern was for an over-extension of the traditional domain of rhetoric – the fear that if every symbolic form was now rhetorical, then rhetoric as a distinct kind of discourse would no longer be recognized or appreciated. Also lamenting some of the changes that had come upon the field was Barnet Baskerville. Baskerville had earned his PhD in 1948 at Northwestern under the direction of Ernest Wrage. In 1979 he published a book titled *The People's Voice*, which was a traditional analysis of American oratorical practice. Two years earlier, Baskerville had published an article in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* titled, "Must We All Be 'Rhetorical Critics?'" In this article Baskerville noted that the study of rhetoric and public address had always been broader than criticism per se and that the recent enthusiasm for criticism and new critical methods risked the loss of those other aspects of public address scholarship. "What then is my concern?" asked Baskerville. "It is that in our enthusiasm for rhetorical criticism . . . we may neglect important scholarly responsibilities. As the literary scholar has made himself custodian of a body of imaginative writings, so should we be the custodians of a body of purposive, public discourse in which

the literary man for various reasons has not shown much interest.”<sup>74</sup> In short, Baskerville asked the field to take seriously the study of rhetorical history, the history of oratory, rhetorical biography, and other aspects of the public address tradition that were seemingly being overwhelmed by the new-found focus on criticism. *The People's Voice* was Baskerville's attempt to revive what some people saw as a dying tradition. He was not alone. Books and anthologies of the late 1970s and early 1980s by Waldo Braden, Cal Logue, Paul Boase, Howard Dorgan, and others also tried to revive the tradition, but it was not to be.<sup>75</sup>

While it is true that some scholars abandoned oratory altogether in the 1970s, others invented new and exciting ways to understand public discourse. And they did so by a method that had been little employed in public address criticism – the close study of a single speech text. Between 1970 and 1972, four public address critics published individual analyses of President Nixon's November 3, 1969, “Vietnamization” address. Never before had any single address been the subject of such sustained critical interest. Equally important, each of these four critics – Robert P. Newman, Hermann G. Stelzner, Forbes I. Hill, and Karlyn Kohrs Campbell – took a decidedly different view of the rhetorical action instantiated in the text.<sup>76</sup> This event was one source of what would become in the 1980s a full-scale school of public address criticism based on the “close reading” of oratorical texts. For the early 1970s, four competing readings of a single speech, even though they came about by happenstance rather than design, was a unique, and to the surprise of many, highly illuminating exercise.

But there were other significant moments as well. Edwin Black began to flesh out his notion of a true psychological criticism with a brilliant essay on “The Second Persona.” Arthur L. Smith (now Molefi Kete Asante) made the first contribution toward a theoretical understanding of black oratory, one that would lead, in time, to his theory of Afrocentricity. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Brenda Hancock illuminated oratorical features of the women's liberation movement, thus planting seeds for the serious study of women's discourse, an interest that can be traced all the way back to 1912 when Edwin Shurter published a short booklet on *Woman Suffrage*. Critics such as G. P. Mohrmann and Michael Leff sketched the outlines of a new traditionalism with a pair of essays on “Lincoln at Cooper Union.” This new traditionalism merged the insights of classical and contemporary rhetoric in new and interesting ways, becoming yet another source for the close reading of the 1980s. Debate over the role, purpose, and methods of criticism proceeded apace as Philip Wander and Michael Calvin McGee laid the theoretical bases for what would become, in the 1980s, two different schools of ideologically driven criticism. Wayne Brockriede set forth the dimensions of argument as applied to critical analysis. Significant studies of public address in the older sense of oratory were conducted by Stephen E. Lucas, Richard B. Gregg, and Halford Ross Ryan. In 1976, Lucas produced a book-length study, based on his Penn State dissertation, titled *Portents of Rebellion*. It became a model of public address scholarship, foreshadowing the rise of a scholarly book culture within public address studies, something that was, at best, sporadic prior to 1976.



Scholars of public address were often textbook writers, but they seldom produced a scholarly book. When Lucas's book was followed in quick succession by Hart's *The Political Pulpit* (1977), Campbell and Jamieson's *Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action* (1978), and a series of short studies by Barbara A. Larson, Ronald Reid, and Kurt Ritter and James R. Andrews (1978), commissioned by the national association as "centennial monographs," it signaled that a book culture was on the horizon.<sup>77</sup> In the 1980s and early 1990s that horizon would come into full view. And it would do so largely because of a handful of scholars who earned their degrees in the 1970s: Roderick P. Hart, John C. Hammerback, and Bruce E. Gronbeck (1970), Halford Ryan (1971), Michael Leff, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, and Robert L. Ivie (1972), Stephen E. Lucas (1973), David Zarefsky, Richard J. Jensen, Thomas B. Farrell, and Michael Calvin McGee (1974), Randall L. Bytwerk (1975), David Henry and Janice Hocker Rushing (1976), G. Thomas Goodnight (1977), Kathleen J. Turner and Barry Brummett (1978), and Robert Hariman and Christine Oravec (1979) chief among them.

## The Rise of the Rhetorical Renaissance

From a historical point of view, the decade of the 1980s was the moment that public address studies came to full intellectual maturity. That maturity was marked by multiple and competing theories of criticism, an interest in all forms of symbolic inducement, a commitment to primary source research, and the commitment to study texts – both oratorical and nonoratorical – in context. The 1980s produced the scholarship that set the agenda for the next 30 years. From James Chesebro's path-breaking work on *Gayspeak* (1981) to Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's *Man Cannot Speak for Her* (1989), the 1980s was a decade of innovation and expansion of the scope and domain of public address studies. The trend toward book publishing that began with Lucas's 1976 book continued in the early 1980s with Bitzer's *Carter vs. Ford: The Counterfeit Debates of 1976* (1980), William R. Underhill's *The Truman Persuasions* (1981), Bytwerk's *Julius Streicher: The Man Who Persuaded a Nation to Hate Jews* (1983), and Ronald Hatzenbuehler and Robert Ivie's *Congress Declares War* (1983). This focus on political rhetoric expanded with Hart's *Verbal Style and the Presidency* (1984), Jamieson's *Packaging the Presidency* (1984), Turner's *LBJ's Dual War: Vietnam and the Press* (1985), J. Michael Hogan's *The Panama Canal in American Politics* (1986), Zarefsky's *President Johnson's War on Poverty* (1986), Hart's *The Sound of Leadership* (1987), Solomon's *Emma Goldman* (1987), Robert E. Denton's *The Primetime Presidency of Ronald Reagan* (1988), Jamieson's *Eloquence in an Electronic Age* (1988), Jamieson and David S. Birdsall's *Presidential Debates* (1988), Ryan's *The Rhetorical Presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt* (1988), and Craig R. Smith's *Freedom of Expression and Partisan Politics* (1989).

Alongside this focus on political rhetoric was the continued expansion of public address to encompass media other than public speech. Representative of this

expansion was Thomas W. Benson's studies of documentary film, Medhurst and Benson's *Rhetorical Dimensions in Media* (1984), Bruce Gronbeck's studies of television criticism and political advertising, Medhurst and Michael A. DeSousa's studies of political cartooning, and Thomas S. Frenz and Janice Hocker Rushing's extension of Jungian and mythic analysis to the medium of film. The rhetorical renaissance was marked by several factors unique in the history of American public address: Books started to be written on a regular, rather than occasional, basis; journals started to reflect a growing interest in the study of various symbolic forms, including speech texts – something the field had long professed but seldom undertaken; book series were launched devoted largely or entirely to rhetoric and public address; rhetorical biographies that took seriously the interrelationships between history and criticism were published; anthologies devoted to practical criticism became commonplace; and a rotating conference devoted to the theory and criticism of public address was established. All of this happened in the 1980s.

In 1987, Bernard K. Duffy and Halford R. Ryan edited the first multi-volume set on public address since the Brigrance volumes of 1943. *American Orators Before 1900: Critical Studies and Sources* and *American Orators of the Twentieth Century: Critical Studies and Sources* were part of the larger effort led by Duffy and Ryan to restore rhetorical history, and especially rhetorical biography, to its rightful place in public address. Ryan followed these volumes in 1988 with *Oratorical Encounters: Selected Studies and Sources of Twentieth-Century Political Accusations and Apologies*. As editors of the "Great American Orators" series at Greenwood Press, Duffy and Ryan oversaw the production of four volumes in the series in 1989 alone, with production continuing into the twenty-first century. Also of significance was the founding of the "Rhetoric and Communication" series at the University of South Carolina Press in 1984, under the editorial direction of Carroll C. Arnold. Although focused initially on rhetorical and communication theory, the South Carolina series eventually came to publish public address studies as well. Likewise, the "Political Communication" series at Praeger, under the editorship of Robert E. Denton, Jr., produced several volumes informed by public address scholarship.

Parallel to these events and part of the driving force behind some of them was the articulation of a theory of public address criticism that came to be known as "close reading." The chief sponsor of this theory was Michael Leff. Starting with a 1980 essay on "Interpretation and the Art of the Rhetorical Critic," Leff identified the central problem in public address criticism as "a thorough preoccupation with abstract theories and methods ... [that] dulls the critic's sensitivity to the problem of interpretation. Thus, we obtain a proliferation of critical methods, without any of these methods solving the problem that lies at their collective origin – the neo-Aristotelian tendency to impose mechanical categories on texts." Because "we have erred so long in the direction of the abstract," Leff argued, "it now seems reasonable to encourage efforts that begin with the particular."<sup>78</sup> In short, Leff proposed that the field start to give serious study to speeches and other symbolic texts as sites of rhetorical action. The fullest explanation of this approach to public address criticism was his 1986 essay, "Textual Criticism: The Legacy of G. P. Mohrman."

In “Textual Criticism,” Leff pointed to the speech text as a complex artistic construction in need of expert analysis and evaluation, a construction involving “a formidable number of elements”:

The close reading and rereading of the text, the analysis of the historical and biographical circumstances that generate and frame its composition, the recognition of basic conceptions that establish the co-ordinates of the text, and an appreciation of the way these conceptions interact within the text and help determine its temporal movement.<sup>79</sup>

For Leff, the “well constructed oration possesses a high degree of artistic integrity and density, and its proper understanding requires careful interpretative work.” Following the logic laid out by Lucas in his 1981 essay “The Schism in Rhetorical Scholarship,”<sup>80</sup> Leff observed that:

To rely exclusively either upon a formal/intrinsic or a representational/extrinsic criterion is to distort the rhetorical integrity of the discourse. Though critical analysis can separate these dimensions, the fact is that they occur simultaneously and work cooperatively within the fabric of the discourse.<sup>81</sup>

Leff then proceeded to formulate what he called a “theory of the text.” Rather than bring a theory such as neo-Aristotelianism or dramatism or structuralism to bear on a text, Leff argued that the critic must discover the theory that lay hidden in the fabric of the text itself. Thus one worked from text to theory rather than from theory to text. Since every text “retains an internal history of its own,” to “experience the text is to be coached to experience the world as the text constructs it.”<sup>82</sup>

This reformation of the theory–text relationship led to two different responses: debate over Leff’s “theoretical” approach, and attempts to validate that approach in the form of practical criticism. The theoretical debate took place in journals and conferences, with Michael Calvin McGee leading the opposition to close reading and advocating, in its stead, his own theory of ideological rhetoric. McGee claimed that there was no such thing as “the” text, and that all so-called discrete texts were better understood as fragments of cultural residues. It was cultural and ideological formations that rhetorical critics should be studying, McGee held.<sup>83</sup> Others joined in the debate, with Celeste Condit, John Angus Campbell, J. Robert Cox, and Dilip Goankar making major statements regarding the nature of rhetorical criticism.<sup>84</sup> While the theoretical debate continued, other scholars tried to put the tenets of close reading into practice. One of the best examples of this second response was Stephen Lucas’s 1988 essay on “The Renaissance of American Public Address: Text and Context in Rhetorical Criticism.” In this essay, Lucas illustrated many of the theoretical premises articulated by Leff. In so doing, he also provided an example of the kind of study that could not easily be classified as history or criticism, for it was both.

Lucas began his essay by noting that the field's "persistent neglect of major texts in the history of American oratory is nothing short of astonishing." He went on to argue that:

Oratory is an art form with its own special criteria, constraints, and potentialities. Judgments about an oration as a literary production or an ideological pronouncement, legitimate and important as they may be, are tangential to its "rhetorical integrity" and cannot yield adequate assessment of it as a work of rhetoric. Such assessment can only be reached by radical attention to the internal dynamics of the text itself.<sup>85</sup>

Lucas then proceeded to demonstrate exactly what he meant by conducting a rhetorical examination of the preamble to the Declaration of Independence. He later expanded this critique to include the whole of the Declaration in a chapter for *American Rhetoric: Context and Criticism* (1989), edited by Thomas W. Benson. Having demonstrated with practical criticism the efficacy of close reading, Lucas concluded,

The ideal is to combine full and penetrating comprehension of the rhetorical situation with a sensitive and discerning reading of the text as an evolving, temporal phenomenon that creates its own internal context even as it is leavened by the social and linguistic context. This is a very different exercise from the kind of artful paraphrase of a speech that often passes for textual analysis in rhetorical criticism. The purpose of the critic is not simply to retell the speech in his or her own words, but to apprehend it fully from the inside out – to break down its rhetorical elements so completely as to determine how they function individually and to explain how they interact to shape the text as a strategic, artistic response to the exigencies of a particular situation.<sup>86</sup>

The movement that had begun in the early 1970s to reclaim oratory as a legitimate and valued site of rhetorical investigation reached a crucial milestone with the convening in June 1988 of the First Biennial Public Address Conference at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. The results of that conference were published the next year under the title *Texts in Context: Critical Dialogues on Significant Episodes in American Political Rhetoric* (1989), edited by Michael C. Leff and Fred J. Kauffeld. This was the first in what would become an ongoing series of conferences that would carry the fruits of the rhetorical renaissance into the new millennium and, along the way, produce several important volumes of public address criticism.<sup>87</sup>

It is more than a little ironic that the "renaissance" of public address studies in the 1980s was powered by the discovery of a basic unit of analysis – the discrete speech text – which should, by all rights, have been discovered within the field's first decade. Yet it was not. Furthermore, this historical irony led to a seeming paradox: a theory of the case that operated within the confines of the particular textual site to generate critical understanding of issues that transcended the case. Even so, the renaissance proceeded to spread. Scholars of the 1980s – James Arnt Aune and Martin J. Medhurst (1980), Celeste Michelle Condit (1982), J. Michael Hogan and Robert C. Rowland (1983), John Louis Lucaites (1984), Steven R. Goldzwig,

Kenneth S. Zagacki, and James Darsey (1985), James Jasinski, Stephen Howard Browne, and John M. Murphy (1986), Mari Boor Tonn, Mark Lawrence McPhail, Kathryn M. Olson, and Denise M. Bostdorff (1987), James M. Farrell (1988), and others – continued the expansion of public address studies, both conceptually and methodologically. Aune brought the insights of Marxist analysis, first proposed by Wander, to bear on rhetorical texts. Medhurst, following in the footsteps of Benson, applied rhetorical precepts to films and cartoons. Condit, inspired by Gronbeck and McGee, investigated the argumentative and ideological structure of the debate over abortion.

From an intellectual endeavor that barely existed in 1900 to the dynamic enterprise of 1990 and beyond, public address scholarship worked to established itself as a center of humanistic learning. Along the way, as David Zarefsky noted in *Texts in Context* (1989),

We have enlarged the meaning of “public address” from a mode to a function of discourse. . . . By embracing a broader conception of public address and not reducing the term to formal oratory, our studies have enhanced the potential for understanding historical or rhetorical situations and for formulating theoretical generalizations.<sup>88</sup>

By adopting this “broader conception of public address,” the 1990s would prove to be the most productive decade of the century, seeing the production of more scholarly books than the previous 100 years combined. The final decade would also bring more book series dedicated to scholarship in rhetoric and public address, a new scholarly journal, the launching of a ten-volume rhetorical history, the establishment of topical conferences, and the continued success of the biennial public address conference. It would also produce one of the largest cohorts of public address scholars, several of whom have authored the chapters that comprise this volume.

Today, studies of how discourses address publics range from the traditional focus on oratory and public speech to analysis of film, television, literature, popular culture, advertising, and the Internet, as well as such nontraditional venues as body art, museums, graveyards, and monuments.<sup>89</sup> Wherever there is symbolic inducement being practiced, the scholar of public address is not far behind.

When James A. Winans took that position in the English department at Cornell in 1899, he could scarcely have imagined what he and his colleagues would ultimately create. One hundred and ten years later, the study of public address is alive and well in all three of its senses: the teaching of public speaking, the analysis of discrete texts, and the evaluation and criticism of discourses – oratorical and non-oratorical – that create, find, or address a public.

## Notes

- 1 See Elizabethada A. Wright and S. Michael Halloran, “From Rhetoric to Composition: The Teaching of Writing in America to 1900,” in *A Short History of Writing Instruction: From Ancient Greece to Modern America*, ed. James J. Murphy, 2nd ed. (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence

Erlbaum, 2001), 213–246; Donald C. Stewart, “The Nineteenth Century,” in *The Present State of Scholarship in Historical and Contemporary Rhetoric*, ed. Winifred Bryan Horner, rev. ed. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1990), 151–185; Gregory Clark and S. Michael Halloran, “Transformations of Public Discourse in Nineteenth-Century America,” in *Oratorical Culture in Nineteenth-Century America: Transformations in the Theory and Practice of Rhetoric*, ed. Gregory Clark and S. Michael Halloran (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1993), 1–26; William N. Denman, “Rhetoric, the ‘Citizen-Orator,’ and the Revitalization of Civic Discourse in American Life,” in *Rhetorical Education in America*, ed. Cheryl Glenn, Margaret M. Lyday, and Wendy B. Sharer (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 3–17; Thomas P. Miller, “Lest We Go the Way of Classics: Toward a Rhetorical Future for English Departments,” in *Rhetorical Education in America*, 18–35. There is ongoing debate over the extent to which the oratorical ideal was abandoned in the latter third of the nineteenth century. For a point of view that differs from my own, see Nan Johnson, *Nineteenth-Century Rhetoric in North America* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991). However, careful study of Johnson’s own Appendix A, “Sample College and University Calendar Descriptions of Rhetoric Courses, 1824–1900,” clearly shows a diminution in the role of oratory and a concomitant increase in written and literary forms of rhetoric.

- 2 Herman Cohen, *The History of Speech Communication: The Emergence of a Discipline, 1914–1945* (Annandale, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1994), 2.
- 3 Yale University granted the first earned PhD in America in 1861. According to Bruce A. Kimball, “Before 1870, the total number of non-medical doctorates granted in the United States amounted to 16. In 1880 alone, 54 were awarded; in 1890, 149; in 1900, 382.” See Kimball, *Orators and Philosophers: A History of the Idea of Liberal Education* (New York: Teacher’s College, Columbia University, 1986), 161–163. Quote on 163.
- 4 There were numerous schools of elocution spread throughout America. The more prominent ones included the National School of Elocution and Oratory (1874), which was located in Philadelphia; the Monroe Conservatory (1880), which became the Emerson College of Oratory in 1891, both of which were located in Boston; the School of Expression (1885), also located in Boston; the Columbia School of Oratory, Physical Culture, and Dramatic Art (1890), which was located in Chicago; and the School of the Spoken Word (1904), located in Boston. On the elocutionary movement see Mary Margaret Robb, “The Elocutionary Movement and Its Chief Figures,” in *History of Speech Education in America: Background Studies*, ed. Karl R. Wallace (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1954), 178–201; Lester L. Hale, “Dr. James Rush,” in *History of Speech Education in America*, 219–237; and Edith Renshaw, “Five Private Schools of Speech,” in *History of Speech Education in America*, 301–325. To view the 1893 catalogue of the Columbia School of Oratory, Physical Culture, and Dramatic Art see [www.lib.colum.edu/archives/1893catalog.pdf](http://www.lib.colum.edu/archives/1893catalog.pdf) (accessed July 27, 2009).
- 5 Elocution is important to the history of public address not only because it was one of the streams that fed into the academic study of Speech, but also because numerous members of the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking had studied under one or more elocutionists. In particular, the teaching of James E. Murdoch and S. S. Curry was highly valued. Even those early members who opposed the elocution movement sometimes studied under elocutionists, including James A. Winans, who spent one summer studying with S. S. Curry. See James Albert Winans, *Public Speaking: Principles and Practice* (Ithaca, NY: Sewell Publishing Co., 1915), xii.

- 6 Most of the information about Winans is derived from his own writings or from Cohen, *The History of Speech Communication*. Also helpful are Thomas W. Benson, "The Cornell School of Rhetoric: Idiom and Institution," *Communication Quarterly* 51 (2003): 1–56; Lionel Crocker, "The Break with Elocution – The Origins of James A. Winans' *Public Speaking*," *Today's Speech* 6 (April 1958): 23–26; Herbert A. Wichelns, "James Albert Winans," *Speech Teacher* 10 (1961): 259–264.
- 7 Examples of such early textbooks include George Jacob Holyoake, *Public Speaking and Debate: A Manual for Advocates and Agitators*, 2nd rev. ed. (Boston: Ginn, 1896); and Guy Carleton Lee, *Principles of Public Speaking* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1899).
- 8 George Pierce Baker, ed., *The Forms of Public Address* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1904).
- 9 On elocution and popular oratory see Nan Johnson, "The Popularization of Nineteenth-Century Rhetoric: Elocution and the Private Learner," in *Oratorical Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, 139–157.
- 10 These multi-volume sets included: Alexander Johnston, ed., *Representative American Orations to Illustrate American Political History*, 3 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1884); Alexander Johnston with James Albert Woodburn, eds., *American Orations: Studies in American Political History*, 4 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1896–1898); *A Library of Universal Literature in Four Parts Comprising Science, Biography, Fiction and the Great Orations: Part Three – Orations* [vols. 6, 7, 8], 8 vols. (New York: P. F. Collier and Son, 1897–1900); Guy Carleton Lee, et al., eds., *The World's Orators: Comprising the Great Orations of the World's History, with Introductory Essays, Biographical Sketches and Critical Notes*, 10 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1899–1901); David J. Brewer, ed., *The World's Best Orations, from the Earliest Period to the Present Time*, 10 vols. (St. Louis: Ferd. P. Kaiser, 1899); Richard Garnett, ed., *Masterpieces of Oratory*, 8 vols. (New York: Fifth Avenue Press, 1900); Julian Hawthorne, ed., *Orations of British Orators* [vol. 1] and *Orations of American Orators* [vol. 2] *Including Biographical and Critical Sketches* (New York: Colonial Press, 1900); Thomas B. Reed, ed., *Modern Eloquence*, 15 vols. (Philadelphia: John D. Morris, 1900); Guy Alexander K. McClure, ed., *Famous American Statesmen and Orators Past and Present, with Biographical Sketches and Their Famous Orations*, 6 vols. (New York: F. F. Lovell Publishing, 1902); Chauncey M. Depew, ed., *The Library of Oratory, Ancient and Modern, with Critical Studies of the World's Great Orators by Eminent Essayists*, 15 vols. (New York: A. L. Fowle, 1902); Mayo W. Hazeltine, ed., *Orations from Homer to William McKinley*, 25 vols. (New York: P. F. Collier, 1902); William Jennings Bryan, ed., *The World's Famous Orations*, 10 vols. (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1906); and John Vance Cheney, ed., *Memorable American Speeches*, 4 vols. (Chicago: The Lakeside Press, R. R. Donnelley and Sons, 1907–1910).
- 11 It is important to note that the terms "elocution" and "elocutionist" did not take on negative connotations until after 1880. See Giles Wilkeson Gray, "What Was Elocution?" *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 46 (1960): 1–7. According to Gray, there were four sources of the opprobrium that attached to the terms in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: (1) elocution became associated primarily with the vocal and stylistic dimensions of oral reading; (2) as such, it lost all contact with the other canons of rhetoric; (3) it came to emphasize form and style over content; and (4) in some cases elocution became associated with the mystical doctrines that grew out of Delsarte's theories of elocution. According to Gray, "One result was that much of the elocution of the late

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries degenerated into statue-posing, bird-calls, and imitations of children” (7). There appear to have been other factors as well. One involved the role of emotion in persuasion. Elocutionists based their theories on arousal of the passions, thus making topical invention and logical analysis moot. One of the reasons that the founders of the field of Speech laid their foundations in Aristotelian rhetoric was to separate themselves from the elocutionists’ emphasis on emotion. Another factor was the crossing of the line between speaking and acting. This was facilitated by the fact that many actors sought out elocutionists to help them with their craft. Elocutionists were committed to the performance of (mostly) fictive works. Speech professors were committed to logical and psychological argumentation on (mostly) social and political topics. Finally, the end of elocutionary displays was entertainment, while the end of academic speech was enlightenment or education.

- 12 “Swarthmore College. Prof. Paul M. Pearson Off On Recital Tour – Fraternity Teas,” *New York Times*, November 17, 1912. Pearson’s travels, and his Quaker connections, brought him into contact with many prominent people, including Herbert Hoover. In 1931, Hoover nominated Pearson as the first civilian governor of the Virgin Islands. Pearson was confirmed by the Senate and served from 1931–1935. From 1935 until his death in 1938, Pearson served as Assistant Director of Housing in the Department of the Interior. Swarthmore College holds the Paul M. Pearson Papers, including a manuscript on Pearson’s life, written by his daughter: *Man of Chautauqua and His Caravans of Culture: The Life of Paul M. Pearson* (2001), by Barbara Pearson Lange Godfrey.
- 13 Robert McLean Cumnock taught elocution at Northwestern from 1868–1913. In 1878, he founded the Cumnock School of Oratory, which was a private school that he operated under contract with Northwestern. In 1921, the Cumnock School became the School of Speech, which, in 2002, became the School of Communication. Cumnock was a renowned teacher and his school drew many students who would later play major roles in the founding of the Speech profession, including Glenn N. Merry, Frank Rarig, and Paul M. Pearson.
- 14 For the original charter members of the NCTE go to [ncte.org/history](http://ncte.org/history). Winans’s signature appears as number twelve on the list.
- 15 This list of miseries is adapted from Frank M. Rarig and Halbert S. Greaves, “National Speech Organizations and Speech Education,” in *A History of Speech Education in America*, 490–517.
- 16 For a more complete rendering of the founding of the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking, see Cohen, *A History of Speech Communication*; J. M. O’Neill, “The National Association,” *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 1 (1915): 51–58; Andrew Thomas Weaver, “Seventeen Who Made History – The Founders of the Association,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 45 (1959): 195–199; Giles Wilkeson Gray, “The Founding of the Speech Association of America,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 50 (1964): 342–345; and Robert C. Jeffrey, “History of the Speech Association of America, 1914–64,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 50 (1964): 432–444. The most recent attempt to assay the founding of the Speech field is William Keith, “On the Origins of Speech as a Discipline: James A. Winans and Public Speaking as Practical Democracy,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 38 (2008): 239–258. Although based on primary source research, Keith’s article is marred by several errors of fact, including the number of scholars who founded the new field (17, not 10); the date and name of what would become the National Speech Arts Association (the National Association of Elocutionists



was founded in 1892, not 1890, and didn't become the National Speech Arts Association until 1906); the "Speech Arts teachers" were, contrary to Keith's claim, at least somewhat interested in both public speaking and debate, which is why Winans, Woolbert, O'Neill, and others became members after the name change; the NCTE came into existence in December 1911, not 1910. These are relatively minor errors in an otherwise enlightening article.

- 17 James A. Winans, "The Need for Research," *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 1 (1915): 17.
- 18 Winans used a local printer in Ithaca to issue the 1915 version of his book. When it began to sell, he was able to negotiate a contract to his liking with a major publisher. See James Albert Winans, *Public Speaking*, rev. ed. (New York: Century Co., 1917).
- 19 See C. H. Woolbert, "A Problem in Pragmatism," *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 2 (1916): 264.
- 20 See Everett Lee Hunt, "General Specialists," *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 2 (1916): 253–263. For further insight into Hunt's thinking during this period see Theodore Otto Windt, Jr., *Rhetoric as a Human Adventure: A Short Biography of Everett Lee Hunt* (Annandale, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1990); and Theodore Otto Windt, Jr., "Everett Lee Hunt and the Humanistic Spirit of Rhetoric," in *Twentieth-Century Roots of Rhetorical Studies*, ed. Jim A. Kuypers and Andrew King (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001), 1–30.
- 21 See C. H. Woolbert, "Theories of Expression: Some Criticisms," *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 1 (1915): 127–143; Charles H. Woolbert, "The Organization of Departments of Speech Science in Universities," *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 2 (1916): 64–77; Woolbert, "A Problem in Pragmatism"; Charles H. Woolbert, "Suggestions as to Methods in Research," *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 3 (1917): 12–26; Charles H. Woolbert, "Conviction and Persuasion: Some Considerations of Theory," *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 3 (1917): 249–264; Charles H. Woolbert, "The Place of Logic in a System of Persuasion," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* 4 (1918): 19–39; Charles H. Woolbert, "Old Terms for New Needs," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* 3 (1918): 296–303; Charles H. Woolbert, "Persuasion: Principles and Methods," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* 4 (1919): 12–25; Charles H. Woolbert, "Persuasion: Principles and Methods," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* 4 (1919): 101–19; Charles H. Woolbert, "Persuasion: Principles and Methods," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* 4 (1919): 212–238; Hunt, "General Specialists"; Everett Lee Hunt, "Academic Public Speaking," *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 3 (1917): 27–36; Everett Lee Hunt, "An Adventure in Philosophy," *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 3 (1917): 297–303; Everett Lee Hunt, "Creative Teaching in War Time," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* 4 (1918): 386–397; and Everett Lee Hunt, "Plato on Rhetoric and Rhetoricians," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* 6 (1920): 35–56.
- 22 Woolbert, "A Problem in Pragmatism," 265.
- 23 The Research Committee, "Research in Public Speaking," *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 1 (1915): 30.
- 24 Thomas C. Trueblood, "College Courses in Public Speaking," *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 1 (1915): 262–263.
- 25 The relationship of the elocutionary movement to the founding of the modern field of Speech, and especially to the study of Public Address, is fascinating – and complex.

Some of the earliest founders of the field were clearly elocutionists – Robert Fulton, Thomas Trueblood, Binney Gunnison, and Robert Cumnock chief among them. Other founders studied at the various schools of elocution, though whether they should be considered elocutionists is debatable. Even so, the influence of elocution on scholars such as Haldor Gislason, Joseph Searle Gaylord, James A. Winans, Charles H. Woolbert, Glenn N. Merry, Frank Rarig, and a host of others is undeniable. Still others, like Paul Pearson, were public readers and reciters, with varying relationships to the schools of elocution. The relationship between reading out loud and giving a formal speech was the chief link of elocution to the field of Speech. Declamation was the middle passage between elocution and public speaking. Winans is often considered the father of modern public speaking, not because he wrote a textbook in 1915 (many others wrote earlier textbooks) but because he was one of the first to make the transition from declamation (which was heavily influenced by theories of elocution) to public speaking (which relied more on audience psychology and thus the need for rhetorical invention as the main engine of audience adaptation). Yet, even as public speaking sought to separate itself from elocution, another part of the emerging field of Speech – that which would come to be called oral interpretation of literature – continued to draw heavily from the elocutionary past. So, in a sense, the field of Speech simultaneously abandoned (public address) and absorbed (oral interpretation) elocution.

- 26 Important volumes of public addresses compiled by academicians who taught public speaking included: Edwin Du Bois Shurter, ed., *Masterpieces of Modern Oratory* (New York: Ginn and Company, 1906); Shurter, ed., *Oratory of the South* (New York: Neale, 1908); Shurter, ed., *American Oratory of To-day* (New York: Hinds, Noble, and Eldridge, 1910); and Robert Fulton and Thomas Trueblood, eds., *British and American Eloquence* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1912).
- 27 Hillis also edited *Lectures and Orations by Henry Ward Beecher* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1913). It is interesting to note that A. Craig Baird reported that one of the ministers whose sermons he made a point of attending while a student at Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary was none other than Newell Dwight Hillis. See Orville A. Hitchcock, “Albert Craig Baird,” in *American Public Address: Studies in Honor of Albert Craig Baird*, ed. Loren D. Reid (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1961), xiv. Several scholars who wrote on rhetoric and oratory in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also produced biographies of noted statesmen. Lorenzo Sears, for example, produced several of these books, including works on Wendell Phillips (1909), John Hancock (1912), and John Hay (1914).
- 28 C. M. Whitman, ed., *American Orators and Oratory* (St. Louis: T. N. James and Co., 1884), preface. It appears as though there are several distinct stages through which the study of orations or speech texts has developed. In the first stage, from approximately 1800 to 1875, orations or extracts were reprinted primarily as resources for the development of eloquence. By studying eloquent passages, the reader could learn to become eloquent himself. In the second stage, from approximately 1875 to 1920, the reprinting of speeches became more a source of historical knowledge and pride of country than models of eloquence. In this second stage, the speeches were used to teach patriotism and served as models of great actions in history, which the reader was encouraged to emulate. In the third stage, from approximately 1920 to 1950, orations (now usually labeled speeches) were reprinted as models of rhetorical excellence in the public speaking classroom. The speeches, now organized by type or occasion, were used as exem-

plars for students to emulate in their own speaking. Hence the proliferation during this period of textbooks using the locution “classified models.” Examples include James Milton O’Neill, *Classified Models of Speech Composition* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1921) and William Norwood Brigance, *Classified Speech Models of Eighteen Forms of Public Address* (New York: F. S. Crofts, 1928). In the fourth stage, from approximately 1950 to the present, speech collections were compiled not just for historical knowledge or rhetorical excellence, but as texts to be studied in their own right. One way to distinguish this last phase from its predecessors was the care that scholars used in reproducing an accurate and complete text, not just excerpts or passages. Notable collections from 1950 through 1989 included Harold F. Harding, ed., *The Age of Danger: Major Speeches on American Problems* (New York: Random House, 1952); Wayland Maxfield Parrish and Marie Hochmuth, eds., *American Speeches* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1954); A. Craig Baird, ed., *American Public Addresses 1740–1952* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956); Ernest J. Wrage and Barnet Baskerville, ed., *American Forum: Speeches on Historic Issues, 1788–1900* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960); Ernest J. Wrage and Barnet Baskerville, eds., *Contemporary Forum: American Speeches on Twentieth-Century Issues* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962); Robert T. Oliver and Eugene E. White, eds., *Selected Speeches from American History* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1966); Bower Aly and Lucile Folse Aly, eds., *American Short Speeches: An Anthology* (New York: Macmillan, 1968); Wil A. Linkugel, R. R. Allen, and Richard L. Johannesen, eds., *Contemporary American Speeches* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1965); James H. McBath and Walter R. Fisher, eds., *British Public Addresses, 1828–1960* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971); Frederick W. Haberman, ed., *Peace*, 3 vols. (Amsterdam, NY: Elsevier, 1972); Ronald F. Reid, ed., *Three Centuries of American Rhetorical Discourse: An Anthology and Review* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1988); James R. Andrews and David Zarefsky, eds., *American Voices: Significant Speeches in American History, 1640–1945* (White Plains, NY: Longman, 1989); and Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, ed., *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, 2 vols. (New York: Praeger, 1989).

- 29 Edwin Du Bois Shurter, *The Rhetoric of Oratory* (New York: Macmillan, 1911), vi–vii.
- 30 See Robert I. Fulton, “College Courses in Public Speaking,” *Public Speaking Review* 3 (1914): 205–209.
- 31 Winans, *Public Speaking*, James Milton O’Neill, Craven Laycock, and Robert Leighton Scales, *Argumentation and Debate* (New York: Macmillan, 1917); Charles Henry Woolbert, *The Fundamentals of Speech: A Behavioristic Study of the Underlying Principles of Speaking and Reading* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1920); and James Milton O’Neill and Andrew Thomas Weaver, *The Elements of Speech* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1926).
- 32 According to Donald K. Smith, there had been only seven MA degrees awarded in the field of Speech prior to 1910. Three of those seven were granted by the University of Iowa, three by the University of Utah, and one by Ohio Wesleyan University. See Smith, “Origin and Development of Departments of Speech,” in *History of Speech Education in America*, 466. Two of the early theses completed at Iowa were almost certainly in the public address tradition. See Thomas Farrell, “Transition in American Oratory, or the Rise of the Lawyer,” MA Thesis, University of Iowa, 1903; and Jesse Resser, “The Second Transition in American Oratory,” MA Thesis, University of Iowa, 1904.
- 33 The first dissertation completed in the field of Speech was Sara Mae Stinchfield, “The Formulation and Standardization of a Series of Graded Speech Tests,” PhD Diss., University of Wisconsin, 1922.

- 34 All of the sources agree that these five men were in the seminar. Other sources suggest that William E. Utterback was also part of the seminar.
- 35 Herbert A. Wichelns, "Research," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* 9 (1923): 233. The book that Wichelns referenced was Charles Mills Gayley and Fred Newton Scott, *An Introduction to the Methods and Materials of Literary Criticism, the Bases in Aesthetics and Poetics* (Boston: Ginn, 1899).
- 36 Other late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century texts on literary criticism include Lorenzo Sears, *Principles and Methods of Literary Criticism* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898); Charles Frederick Johnson, *Elements of Literary Criticism* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1898); Barrett Wendell, *A Literary History of America* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1900); and George Saintsbury, *A History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe from the Earliest Texts to the Present Day* (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood and Sons, 1900–1904).
- 37 Herbert A. Wichelns, "The Literary Criticism of Oratory," in *Studies in Rhetoric and Public Speaking in Honor of James Albert Winans*, ed. A. M. Drummond (New York: Century Co., 1925), 181–216. Quote on 207.
- 38 Herbert A. Wichelns, *Landmark Essays on Rhetorical Criticism*, ed. Thomas W. Benson (Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press, 1993), 2.
- 39 Wichelns, *Landmark Essays on Rhetorical Criticism*, 26.
- 40 These 15 points are abstracted from pages 212–213. Only 400 copies of the original book were printed. It was reprinted by Russell and Russell in 1962. Wichelns's chapter has been reprinted many times. It is easily accessed in Martin J. Medhurst, ed., *Landmark Essays on American Public Address* (Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press, 1993), 1–32. The discerning reader will note that much of the analysis in this chapter is borrowed from my earlier essay, "The Academic Study of Public Address: A Tradition in Transition," which is the introductory chapter to *Landmark Essays on American Public Address*.
- 41 The title of Baird's 1912 thesis was "The Sources of Chaucer's Man-at-Laws Tale." The thesis was directed by Harry Emerson Ayers, who was a Professor of Middle English at Columbia. Two years earlier, in 1910, Baird had earned a Bachelor of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary. His BA degree was from Wabash College in 1907.
- 42 See Albert Craig Baird, "A Selected Bibliography of American Oratory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* 12 (1926): 352–356. There was at least one person thinking about speeches during this period. See Hugo E. Hellman, "The Greatest American Oratory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 24 (1938): 36–39.
- 43 Warren Choate Shaw, *History of American Oratory* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1928), preface.
- 44 The first PhD in Speech at Iowa was awarded in 1926. There were two dissertations completed at Iowa in 1930 under the direction of A. Craig Baird. One was by Brigance and the other was Floyd W. Lambertson, "Survey and Analysis of American Homiletics Prior to 1860." I have chosen to give Brigance pride of place. For a detailed rendering of Brigance's time at Iowa, see David George Burns, "The Contributions of William Norwood Brigance to the Field of Speech," PhD Diss., Indiana University, 1970. For an overview of Brigance's contributions to the academic study of public address, see Martin J. Medhurst, "William Norwood Brigance and the Democracy of the Dead: Toward a Genealogy of the Rhetorical Renaissance," in *Rhetoric and Democracy: Pedagogical and Political Practices*, ed. Todd F. McDorman and David M. Timmerman (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2008), 3–38. I have drawn several paragraphs from this earlier work.

- 45 This statement is based on close examination of the Knower Index, prepared under the guidance of Professor Franklin H. Knower and published yearly in *Speech Monographs* from 1935 to 1969. Several of the other early graduate programs – Louisiana State, Northwestern, Columbia, and Southern California, for example – simply did not produce many theses or dissertations in public address until the late 1940s or 1950s. According to the Knower Index, Louisiana State, Northwestern, Columbia, and Southern California *combined* produced only eight dissertations in public address between 1930 and 1945. The earliest of these was Doris G. Yoakam, “An Historical Study of the Public Speaking Activities of Women in America from 1828 to 1860,” PhD Diss., University of Southern California, 1935.
- 46 W. Norwood Brigance, “Whither Research?” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 19 (1933): 552–561. Quote on 556.
- 47 Brigance, “Whither Research?” 556–557.
- 48 Brigance, “Whither Research?” 558–559.
- 49 In addition to Brigance, the original members of the committee were A. Craig Baird (Iowa), C. C. Cunningham (Northwestern), Giles W. Gray (Louisiana State), Louis M. Eich (Michigan), Frank M. Rarig (Minnesota), Grafton P. Tanquary (Southern California), Herbert A. Wichelns (Cornell University), and W. Hays Yeager (George Washington University). Later additions to the committee were Lionel Crocker (Denison), Dallas C. Dickey (Louisiana State), Henry Lee Ewbank (Wisconsin), and Lester Thonssen (College of the City of New York).
- 50 Two other scholarly public address books were also published in 1934. See Lionel G. Crocker, *Henry Ward Beecher’s Art of Preaching* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934); and Willard Hays Yeager, *Chauncey Mitchell Depew, the Orator* (Washington, DC: George Washington University Press, 1934).
- 51 There were 16 articles published in the speech literature on Lincoln, Wilson, and Roosevelt between 1925 and 1943. Most of these were written by Mildred Freburg Berry, Dayton David McKean, Earl W. Wiley, and Robert T. Oliver.
- 52 William Norwood Brigance, “The Twenty-Eight Foremost American Orators,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 24 (1938): 376–380.
- 53 Loren D. Reid, “The Perils of Rhetorical Criticism,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 30 (1944): 416–422. Quotes on 417 and 421.
- 54 Reid, “The Perils of Rhetorical Criticism,” 422.
- 55 Ernest J. Wrage, “Public Address: A Study in Social and Intellectual History,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 33 (1947): 451–457. Quotes on 454.
- 56 Wrage, “Public Address,” 452, 456.
- 57 A. Craig Baird and Lester Thonssen, “Methodology in the Criticism of Public Address,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 33 (1947): 134–138. Quote on 134.
- 58 In a personal letter to the author on August 11, 1993, Carroll C. Arnold noted: “I think few people know that ‘movement studies’ were promoted by Wichelns (and Henry Ewbank at Wisconsin) well before they became a ‘fashion.’ Ewbank directed studies on the neutrality debates prior to WW II, I remember (and there were others). Wichelns was more insistent on that tack. He directed Griffin’s study of the Anti-Masonic movement and Arthur Barnes’s (later Head of Journalism at Penn State) study of the Civil Service Reform movement – and there are others that I can’t now remember. The trouble was that neither Wichelns nor Ewbank *wrote* about this as a mode of research, so when Griffin came along in publication about movement study, one couldn’t tell where the notion had really started.” Further research seems to indicate

- that movement studies did, indeed, start in the 1930s. See, for example, Dallas C. Dickey, "The Movement for the Conservation of Natural Resources, 1900–1912," MA Thesis, University of South Dakota, 1932.
- 59 Wayland Maxfield Parrish, "The Study of Speeches," in *American Speeches*, ed. Parrish and Hochmuth, 7.
- 60 Thomas R. Nilsen, "Criticism and Social Consequences," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 42 (1956): 173–178. Quote on 175.
- 61 Nilsen, "Criticism and Social Consequences," 177.
- 62 Albert J. Croft, "The Functions of Rhetorical Criticism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 42 (1956): 283–291. Quote on 284.
- 63 Croft, "The Functions of Rhetorical Criticism," 285.
- 64 Croft, "The Functions of Rhetorical Criticism," 286.
- 65 The articles from the special issue of *Western Speech* (Spring 1957) were published in book form, along with a few other essays, in 1968. See Thomas R. Nilsen, ed., *Essays in Rhetorical Criticism* (New York: Random House, 1968).
- 66 For a discussion of Black's relationship with Wichelns and a comparison of the dissertation to the book, see Thomas W. Benson, "Edwin Black's Cornell University," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 10 (2007): 481–488. Benson's article is part of a section "Celebrating the Life of Edwin Black, 1929–2007," which includes remembrances from Martin J. Medhurst, John Angus Campbell, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Lloyd F. Bitzer, James Darsey, and Stephen E. Lucas.
- 67 Edwin Black, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 35.
- 68 Black, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 111, 104. "Disclosure" would become a central term for Black as he worked out his program of psychological criticism. It received its fullest treatment in his essay, "Secrecy and Disclosure as Rhetorical Forms," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 74 (1988): 133–150.
- 69 Black, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 110.
- 70 Thomas O. Sloan et al., "Report of the Committee on the Advancement and Refinement of Rhetorical Criticism," in *The Prospect of Rhetoric*, ed. Lloyd F. Bitzer and Edwin Black (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1971), 220.
- 71 Sloan, "Report," 222.
- 72 See Donald C. Bryant, "Some Problems of Scope and Method in Rhetorical Scholarship," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 23 (1937): 182–189; Bryant, "Rhetoric: Its Functions and Its Scope," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 39 (1953): 401–424. Bryant's books included *Edmund Burke and His Literary Friends* (St. Louis: Washington University Studies in Language and Literature, 1939) and *An Historical Anthology of Select British Speeches*, edited with Carroll C. Arnold, Frederick W. Haberman, Richard Murphy, and Karl R. Wallace. His articles and chapters on Burke included "Edmund Burke on Oratory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 19 (1933): 1–18; "Edmund Burke's Opinions of Some Orators of His Day," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 20 (1934): 241–254; "Some Notes on Burke's Speeches and Writings," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 25 (1939): 406–409; "Edmund Burke's Conversation," in *Studies in Speech and Drama in Honor of Alexander H. Drummond* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1944), 354–368; "Edmund Burke: New Evidence, Broader View," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 38 (1952): 435–445; "Burke's *Present Discontents*: The Rhetorical Genesis of a Party Testament," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 42 (1956): 115–126; "The Contemporary Reception of Edmund Burke's Speaking," in *Historical Studies of Rhetoric and Rhetoricians*, ed. Raymond F. Howes (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1961),

- 271–293; “Edmund Burke: The New Images,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 52 (1966): 329–336; “The Rhetorical Art of Edmund Burke: Wilkes and the Middlesex Election, 1769,” “British Voices for America, 1765–1780,” and “The Rhetorical Art of Edmund Burke: *A Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol, 1777*,” all in his *Rhetorical Dimensions in Criticism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), 44–66, 67–90, 91–118. Bryant was the first person in the area of rhetoric and public address to pursue a systematic research agenda, which he worked out over the course of five decades.
- 73 Bryant, *Rhetorical Dimensions in Criticism*, 40.
- 74 Barnett Baskerville, “Must We All Be ‘Rhetorical Critics’?” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 63 (1977): 112.
- 75 See, for example, Waldo W. Braden, ed., *Oratory in the New South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979); Paul H. Boase, ed., *The Rhetoric of Protest and Reform, 1870–1898* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1980); Cal M. Logue and Howard Dorgan, eds., *The Oratory of Southern Demagogues* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981); Waldo W. Braden, *The Oral Tradition in the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983); and Calvin M. Logue and Howard Dorgan, eds., *A New Diversity in Contemporary Southern Rhetoric* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987). Howard Dorgan later produced a series of interesting books on religious rhetoric in Appalachia, the first two of which were *Giving Glory to God in Appalachia: Worship Practices of Six Baptist Subdenominations* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987) and *The Old Regular Baptists of Central Appalachia: Brothers and Sisters in Hope* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989).
- 76 See Robert P. Newman, “Under the Veneer: Nixon’s Vietnam Speech of November 3, 1969,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56 (1970): 168–178; Hermann G. Stelzner, “The Quest Story and Nixon’s November 3, 1969 Address,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 57 (1971): 163–172; Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, “An Exercise in the Rhetoric of Mythical America,” in *Critiques of Contemporary Rhetoric* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1972); and Forbes I. Hill, “Conventional Wisdom – Traditional Form: The President’s Message of November 3, 1969,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 58 (1972): 373–386. These four critiques, along with the subsequent debate between Hill and Campbell, were reprinted in James R. Andrews, *The Practice of Rhetorical Criticism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1990) and thus reached a much larger audience.
- 77 The bicentennial monographs all focused on the revolutionary period. See Barbara A. Larson, *Prologue to Revolution: The War Sermons of the Reverend Samuel Davies* (Falls Church, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1978); Ronald F. Reid, *The American Revolution and the Rhetoric of History* (Falls Church, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1978); and Kurt W. Ritter and James R. Andrews, *The American Ideology: Reflections of the Revolution in American Rhetoric* (Falls Church, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1978). Other public address scholars were also examining revolutionary rhetoric. See G. Jack Gravlee and James R. Irvine, eds., *Pamphlets and the American Revolution: Rhetoric, Politics, Literature, and the Popular Press* (Delmar, NY: Scholars’ Facsimiles and Reprints, 1976).
- 78 Michael C. Leff, “Interpretation and the Art of the Rhetorical Critic,” *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 44 (1980): 346.
- 79 Michael Leff, “Textual Criticism: The Legacy of G. P. Mohrman,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 72 (1986): 380.
- 80 Stephen E. Lucas, “The Schism in Rhetorical Scholarship,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 67 (1981): 1–20.

- 81 Leff, "Textual Criticism," 169.
- 82 Leff, "Textual Criticism," 175.
- 83 Michael Calvin McGee, "Text, Context, and the Fragmentation of Contemporary Culture," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 54 (1990): 274–289.
- 84 See the special issue on rhetorical criticism in the *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 54 (1990): 249–376.
- 85 Stephen E. Lucas, "The Renaissance of American Public Address: Text and Context in Rhetorical Criticism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 74 (1988): 189.
- 86 Lucas, "The Renaissance of American Public Address," 197.
- 87 In addition to *Texts in Context*, the volumes produced to date from the biennial public address conferences include Thomas W. Benson, ed., *Rhetoric and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1997); J. Michael Hogan, ed., *Rhetoric and Community: Studies in Unity and Fragmentation* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998); and Shawn J. Parry-Giles and Trevor Parry-Giles, eds., *Public Address and Moral Judgment: Critical Studies in Ethical Tensions* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2009).
- 88 David Zarefsky, "The State of the Art in Public Address Scholarship," in *Texts in Context: Critical Dialogues on Significant Episodes in American Political Rhetoric*, ed. Michael C. Leff and Fred J. Kauffeld (Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press, 1989), 304.
- 89 For a sampling of rhetorical criticism applied to these various symbolic forms, see Martin J. Medhurst and Thomas W. Benson, eds., *Rhetorical Dimensions in Media: A Critical Casebook*, 2nd rev. ed. (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt, 1991); Janice Hocker Rushing and Thomas S. Frenetz, *Projecting the Shadow: The Cyborg Hero in American Film* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Bonnie J. Dow, *Prime-Time Feminism: Television, Media Culture, and the Women's Movement Since 1970* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996); Thomas W. Benson and Carolyn Anderson, *Reality Fictions: The Films of Frederick Wiseman*, 2nd ed. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002); Barbara Warnick, *Critical Literacy in a Digital Age: Technology, Rhetoric, and the Public Interest* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2002); Cara A. Finnegan, *Picturing Poverty: Print Culture and FSA Photographs* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2003); Lester C. Olson, *Benjamin Franklin's Vision of American Community: A Study in Rhetorical Iconology* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004); Barry Brummett, *Rhetoric in Popular Culture* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006); Lawrence J. Prelli, ed., *Rhetorics of Display* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006); Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, *No Caption Needed: Iconic Photographs, Public Culture, and Liberal Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Barbara Warnick, *Rhetoric Online: Persuasion and Politics on the World Wide Web* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007); Thomas W. Benson and Brian J. Snee, eds., *The Rhetoric of the New Political Documentary* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008); and Lester C. Olson, Cara A. Finnegan, and Diane S. Hope, eds., *Visual Rhetoric: A Reader in Communication and American Culture* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008).



The following outline is provided as an overview of and topical guide to academic disciplines: An academic discipline or field of study is a branch of knowledge, taught and researched as part of higher education. A scholar's discipline is commonly defined by the university faculties and learned societies to which they belong and the academic journals in which they publish research.